

The night was calm as a tall black cloaked figure made his way down Willow Street, in the town of Godric's Hollow. Children and adults out celebrating Halloween instinctually kept their distance from the man, some even crossing to the other side of the street to stay out of his way. Something about him radiated fear and power.

The man finally stopped in front of what to most looked like a small stretch of open land between two houses. In actuality there was an entire property, house and all, centered between these two houses. Only a few people could see this house however as it was under a very advanced type of magic.

The black cloaked man stepped forward onto the protected property and if there had been anyone watching him at that moment, it would have appeared as if he had suddenly disappeared. Instead the man had stepped on to a crisply cut lawn leading up to a small two story home. Through the window of the home a girl of no more than twenty, could be seen lounging on the sofa reading a book. The dim glow of a night-light could be seen coming from one of the upstairs windows.

The black cloaked man wasted no time in advancing on the door. When he was a few feet from it, a long piece of wood seemed to magically appear in his hand. With a lazy flick of his wrist the door was ripped off its hinges and sent backwards into the house. The girl who had been in the living room rushed out wand drawn only to pale considerably upon encountering the snake like face and glowing red eyes of the man.

"P-Please, D-Don't hurt them." The man remained silent, only raising the area of skin where his eyebrows would have been, had he had any. Then with a snort of laughter and another flick of wrist the girl flew backwards into a wall, colliding with a sickly crunch and falling to the floor unconscious.

"Foolish girl." The man said as he stepped over the remains of the door and proceeded upstairs.

Down the hall and to the right he quietly entered the nursery. Inside were two cribs, both decked out in blue and each had an identical Quidditch themed mobile above it. In one crib a small black hair, green eyed boy sat quietly watching the man. In the other a red haired boy slept soundly.

"Black hair, you must be Harry." The small child smiled at the mention of his name and raising one chubby hand waved at the cloaked man.

"'lo!" If the man had been capable of such thoughts he might have considered the child cute, unfortunately those thoughts had stopped appearing in his head long ago.

"Well then Harry, since you're awake and so enthusiastic I believe we shall start with you." The mans voice had gone deathly quiet and had a dark tone. Harry stopped waving and stunned the snake like man by narrowing his eyes and examining him carefully.

"Bad man!"

"Yes Harry I am a very bad man. Too bad I'm short on time, you're mommy and daddy might be home soon and we wouldn't want them to try and stop me now would we?" With that he raised his wand and snarled at the boy as he pointed it at the top of his head. "Avada Kedavra!"

A sickly green light shot out of the wand towards the small child, but at almost the exact same moment a golden bubble enveloped the boy. The green light collided with the bubble and a small sliver of it made it through, the rest however was reflected back at the man.

The small sliver that had breached the bubble hit the boy just above the hairline on his forehead. It knocked the boy unconscious and left a lightening bolt shaped scar where it had struck. Unfortunately it would be several years before anyone, even Harry, discovered the scar hidden under his unruly black hair.

The rest of the green light had been reflected backwards right into the snake faced mans chest. With an ear piercing screech that awoke the boy in the other crib the pale faced man known as Voldemort was ripped to pieces by his own spell. No one was there to see the black cloud that left his body as it disintegrated.

The force of the reflected spell shattered every piece of glass for miles around. The window of the nursery was no exception, and one piece of glass grazed the red haired boy as it flew by him, leaving a

long thin cut across his chest. The baby immediately began crying loudly from the pain.

So only seconds after it had started the room was quiet once again, except for the cries of the injured red haired boy.

Lily and James Potter had been attending a meeting of the Order of the Phoenix when the horrible news came. Sirius Black their best friend had stumbled into the meeting room shouting wildly. After several minutes in which he calmed down he looked straight at Lily and James.

"Peter's gone. No signs of a struggle, I think he went willingly." James and Lily paled immediately. Peter had been their secret keeper and if he had gone to Voldemort, their precious twins might be in trouble.

Without a second glance James and Lily were off running as fast as they could towards the edge of the wards so they could apparate home. Following quickly behind them were several Order members including Albus Dumbledore. Not waiting for everyone else Lily and James disappeared the second they exited the wards.

James and Lily reappeared in what looked like a war zone. Muggle police and fire men were all over the place, and it appeared that every window for miles around had been shattered. They forced their way through the crowd until they caught sight of the house, the Fidelius Charm must have still been in place because no one was walking in or near their house.

James and Lily rushed towards the house panicking even more when they found front door blown off its hinges. Once they were inside they were met by a dazed and confused Jennifer Spinnet, the girl who had been babysitting for them. When she saw them entering the house her features panicked and she began stuttering and pointing wildly at the door and the stairs.

They ignored her as they continued up the stairs wands drawn running as fast as they could to the nursery. Once they reached the door they found it shut but unlocked. Throwing it open James leapt into the room with Lily right behind him both scanning the room with their wands.

Instead of the evil snaked face man and their dead children as they had expected to find, they were instead met with an empty room. The cribs were still intact and one of them had painful whimpers coming from it. James moved to the crib the noise was coming from and hastily uttered some spells.

It would be wise to note that James was poor at casting healing charms. Therefore even though a fully qualified healer would have healed the babies cut leaving behind no trace that it had ever happened, James left behind a ragged scar stretching across the boys chest.

Lily checked on the other crib to find her oldest son Harry sleeping peacefully, his thumb in his mouth. She breathed a sigh of relief as she moved to check on her son who was awake, only to stumble over a ripped and partially destroyed black cloak. As she kicked the cloak away from her feet a sickly bone white wand that was singed and burnt rolled out of the cloak and onto the floor.

She had of course seen this wand before and shrieked upon discovering Voldemort's wand in her children's nursery. James spun around and upon seeing the wand cursed loudly. He was just preparing to smash it under his heel when Dumbledore followed by several other order members rushed into the room. Dumbledore held up a hand stopping James and carefully picked up the wand.

Holding the tip of Voldemort's wand to his he muttered under his breathe and watched as a paler ghostly version of the sickly green light came out of Voldemort's wand and hovered in front of it. This seemed to mean something to Dumbledore who looked carefully from the sleeping Harry to the still whimpering red haired child. Seeing the ragged scar on his chest Dumbledore's eyes widened and he moved forward taking the boy from his fathers arms.

"Ladies and Gentleman, I give you Daniel Potter. The Boy-Who-Lived!"

A/N This is my first fanfic. I have the next several chapters ready and will put up at least one later this weekend, but I might be persuaded to be more generous if I get some nice reviews. :-)

## Chapter 1: The Forgotten Child/When Harry met Ginny

After that night everyone in the wizarding world celebrated young Daniel Potter as the hero and savior of the wizarding world. His parents soon became swept up in the publicity and fame this brought, lavishing gifts on young Daniel. Few people knew that the Boy-Who-Lived had an older twin brother, and even fewer knew of the poor conditions in which his brother lived.

For you see dear reader, while young Daniel Potter received all his parents attention and was always center spotlight, the true savior of the wizarding world was pushed to the back and slowly lost all the love his parents had. Harry Potter lived in the smallest room of his families home, which contained several bedrooms. One for his parents, one for Daniel, one for Daniel's toys, and finally the last one for Harry.

Harry didn't mind the small room. He had a bed, a desk, three chairs, and a bookcase. Though the objects on the bookcase were unusual. Instead of the small picture books most would expect a five year old boy to have, Harry had multi chaptered books and several textbooks. He was given an allowance of 5 sickles every two weeks. He used this money whenever his family went to Diagon Alley to buy advanced books from Flourish and Blotts.

His parents never noticed his little trips to the bookshop since they were too busy trying to keep reporters and fans away from Daniel. Harry had already bought and read all the books most first and second year Hogwarts students would need. In an attempt to gain some attention from his parents he had begun studying Ancient Runes and Charms, the areas his mother worked in at the Department of Mysteries. So far his advanced reading had gone unnoticed.

The years continued to pass, and as they went so did the love and affection Harry had received before the attack. Each year his stack of presents at his birthday or Christmas would get progressively smaller until finally by the Christmas when he was seven he only received two presents. A box of chocolate frogs from his parents, and a small picture book about a train from his godfather Sirius.

Neither Lily nor James had noticed the heartbroken look Harry had as he left the room. They were too busy excitedly watching Daniel's

reactions to the small mountain of presents he had received. If one were to look and compare the life of Daniel Potter and Dudley Dursely a person would find them with very similar personalities, though Daniel had somehow managed to remain healthily skinny.

Now dear reader you are probably thinking to yourself, surely something must happen to make young Harry's life better. I wish I could tell you that someone came and took poor Harry away to live a happy life where he was loved and cared for. Unfortunately that didn't happen, nor would it ever happen.

I can tell you though that something good would appear in Harry's life, and small things would begin changing. And slowly, ever so slowly, Harry would begin finding the love he would need to overcome the obstacles ahead. But I'm getting ahead of myself, first you must find out how that good thing appeared in Harry's life.

For Harry and Daniel's eight birthday, Lily and James decided to throw a party. It was more of an extravaganza and if either had asked Harry he would have compared it to the grand party of Bilbo Baggins 111th birthday. Neither asked though. In fact Harry's name wasn't even mentioned on the invitation. So on the day of the party everyone showed up with one present, for Daniel.

Even the cake only said 'Happy Birthday Daniel!' with a large number eight candle at the top. So no one, except Sirius, noticed that Harry Potter wasn't at the party. Harry was in fact locked away in his room studying the delicate art of Arthimancy. He had nearly mastered it and couldn't wait to begin creating his own spells.

For you see, Harry had found at the tender age of 5¾ that he was a natural at wandless magic. (a/n shocking I know) Since then he had mastered every spell mentioned in The Standard Book of Spells Grade One, Two, Three and he was halfway through four. He never found a need to use most of the spells, and no one had ever noticed it.

So it was that around three pm Harry found himself slightly thirsty and made his way down to the kitchen. Everyone was out back in the yard for the party, and Harry caught a brief glimpse of his brother and several other boys playing Quidditch. Harry had never found any attraction to the sport, even though thanks to a small amount of curiosity he had found he was a natural on the broom. To him

however the broom seemed too restricting as though he knew he could fly better without the broom if only there was a way.

So Harry took one final glance out the window at the party which was filled with dozens of people and children. Shrugging Harry turned back towards his room. However, on his way past the room next to his, Daniel's toy room, Harry heard muffled crying coming through the door.

It would be a good time now to briefly describe Harry's character. For even though he had been raised ignored and practically unloved Harry Potter was a kind and friendly person. A normal person would be hard pushed to find another with even have the kindness and compassion Harry had. Therefore, checking out the source of someone crying seemed natural to Harry.

Upon opening the door Harry found himself in a large room piled high with toys and all sorts of odd playthings. In a chair looking out the window was a small red haired girl. Actually, her hair wasn't really red. If a person could contain fire, turn it into something that looked like hair, and attach it to someone's head, that would more accurately describe the color of this girls hair. The girl was crying quietly to herself, hiccupping every once in a while as her head moved along with something outside the window.

Harry quietly approached the girl, but made sure to quietly move several objects out of his way making just enough noise to let the girl know he was there. He didn't want to scare her after all. Finally he reached the girls side and was able to see that she was watching the Quidditch match outside, and by the way her head was moving back and forth she was following his brothers movements.

She was still crying however so Harry stuck out a hand and gently laid it on her shoulder. The girl turned to look at him for the first time, and Harry's piercing emerald green eyes met the deepest most beautiful brown eyes he had ever seen. When she met his eyes the girl gasped quietly and stopped crying almost immediately. Harry smiled shyly at her and then pulled up another chair next to her. He sat down and they both continued watching the Quidditch match in silence for several minutes. Finally the girl broke the silence.

"Who are you?" Harry glanced at her and smiled sadly.

"I'm Harry, Harry Potter. I'm Daniels twin brother." The girl who he figured couldn't be more than a year or two younger than him gasped and her mouth dropped open in shock.

"B-But no one ever mentioned he had a twin brother! And whenever mum or dad told me the story about the boy-who-lived they never mentioned you!" Harry's sad smile stayed fixed on his face. He hated letting people know about his personal life but for some reason he felt drawn to this girl.

"I'm one of those smaller details a lot of people leave out." This only seemed to anger the girl as she became a deep shade of red which Harry noted made her look very cute.

"But your name isn't even on the cake!" Harry's face became very neutral as he shrugged and looked back out the window. A few silent minutes later Harry whispered quietly.

"Sometimes my parents are those people who forget the small details." A tear silently tracked its way down Harry's face, it was on the side not facing the now shocked and horrified girl.

The girl followed Harry's line of sight and found his gaze fixed on the red head of his mother who was sitting with another group of women talking happily. Not knowing what else to do and coming from a large family herself the girl got up and pulled Harry into the strongest most heartfelt hug she could. Harry seemed a little shocked at first but after a few seconds returned the hug. Once they'd finally broken apart Harry turned back to the girl.

"I never even asked your name." The girl smiled and stuck out her hand.

"Ginny Weasley." Harry excepted her hand and shook it lightly. They both began looking out the window again and after another few minutes of comfortable silence Harry asked nonchalantly.

"So why were you crying?" Ginny sighed, she knew this had been coming but didn't want Harry to know she'd been crying over something so silly.

"It's stupid it was nothing."



"If it made you cry it wasn't nothing." Ginny rolled her eyes before finally answering.

"I wanted to go fly with all the boys, but my brothers said I don't know how to fly, when I do. And then Daniel said I couldn't go cause girls have cooties and everyone knows girls can't fly as well as boys. What was the worst, was that all my brothers agreed with him, usually their too over protective but the one time I want them to be, they side against me."

Harry looked at her carefully, for some unknown reason he had a sudden urge to punch his brother, and then he remembered how Ginny had been watching Daniel fly.

"You like him." It wasn't a question and Ginny knew it. Instead of the response he had expected though, Ginny shook her head violently.

"Not anymore. I think I liked the idea of him. In reality he's just an arrogant stupid boy." Harry took on a look of mock hurt.

"I'm a boy too you know." Ginny laughed lightly and smiled brilliantly at him.

"Yes but you're nothing like him. You're kind and compassionate and everything I thought he'd be." She blushed and quickly looked away. Trying to move away from the subject that was obviously embarrassing her Harry changed the subject.

"So you said you can fly, are you any good?" Ginny turned back around excitedly.

"I think I am, my brothers wouldn't know. I kind of sneak out when they're asleep and use their brooms. I love flying but sometimes it feels like... I don't know... like it's too easy you know." Harry smiled knowingly and looked out at the people on brooms again.

"It's like the broom is restricting you and you know you could do it so much better if you didn't need the broom." Ginny smiled and nodded her head excitedly. "That's why I want to try and become a bird Animagus when I'm older." Ginny stopped nodding and looked at him in confusion.

"What's an an-ani-Animagus?" Harry smiled remembering that that knowledge was third year stuff.

"It's a person who can change into an animal and remain in full control of their body. It's supposed to be really difficult and take a long time to do. But if it lets me fly without a broom, I think it might be worth it." Ginny's face had turned from one of confusion to one of awe.

"I think I'd like to do that too someday."

Harry and Ginny remained in the toy room for the rest of the evening talking about whatever came to their minds, or simply sitting in comfortable silence watching the party going on below them. Finally around eight pm that night Mrs. Weasley's loud voice echoed from down stairs calling her daughter. Ginny latched onto Harry's hand and pulled him down the stairs.

They found Mrs. Weasley in the kitchen with Lily both smiling and talking happily. When Ginny appeared with Harry, Lily looked slightly surprised, and Molly looked curiously at the boy who was like a smaller version of James.

"Who's this Ginny-dear?" Ginny smiled broadly at her mother and pulled Harry forward.

"This is Harry, Daniel's brother. We've been upstairs talking all day." Molly shook the hand Harry offered and smiled kindly at him.

"I didn't see you at the party Harry, were you there or did I just miss you?"

"Oh no, I was upstairs reading and lost track of time. I didn't realize that the party had started until I came down for a drink and found Ginny looking for a glass." Molly laughed while Ginny smiled gratefully at him from behind her mother.

"Just like my Percy, so what book had you so enthralled that you missed the start of the party?" Harry noticed his mother's attention for once solely focused on him, he was positive she didn't even know he liked to read.

"Of Mice and Men it's a really good book." Harry took a proud glee in the shocked look on his mother's face.

In the wizarding world *Of Mice and Men* would be assumed to be a children's book. However Lily, being a muggle, recognized it as a famous piece of literature that most teenagers couldn't comprehend. To hear that her eight-year-old son had been joyfully reading it caught her attention. Molly nodded kindly, pretending as if she'd heard of it before. Then she turned back to her daughter.

"Well, Ginny, we really must be going; it's getting late."

"Mum, can I come back and play with Harry another day, please?" She pulled her best set of puppy dog eyes on her mother, who turned and looked at Lily.

"Well, I don't see any harm in it, after all Ronald is coming over to play with Daniel next week, why don't I just send Ginny over as well." Harry turned to his mother with a mix of hope and fear of rejection on his face. Lily nodded her consent, and a large ecstatic smile broke across Harry's face. Lily was said to say she had never seen Harry this happy.

Ginny squealed with joy and hugged Harry tightly, which he awkwardly returned under his mother's curious eyes. After that Molly and Ginny left out into the backyard to gather the rest of her siblings, they would be taking a portkey home. As they left through the back door, Sirius came in, he had a wrapped gift under one arm.

"Harry!" Harry smiled at his godfather, although the man spent more time with Daniel; he did at least try to spend some time with Harry. They just didn't share any common interests.

"Hi Sirius." Harry hugged his godfather, who laughed joyfully.

"How many times do I have to tell you, pup, call me Padfoot. Now where were you, I didn't see you all day and I've been meaning to give you your present." Before Harry could say anything, Lily spoke up from behind him.

"He was making a friend and I think he was being a very nice young man after his brother had shown just how much like his father he truly is." Harry turned and looked at his mother in total shock,

wondering if she ignored him as much as he thought. She smiled knowingly at his look. "I saw what your brother said to her and I told him to apologize to her, apparently he didn't listen to me if you'll excuse me I have to go talk to him."

Lily left the kitchen without another word to Harry. Sirius looked back and forth between Lily's retreating back and Harry's shocked look before pushing his present under Harry's nose. It was then that Harry realized his parents had never given him a present. He glumly took the present and unwrapped it. Harry knew it was book, Sirius only gave him books. It was the only thing Sirius knew he liked. However Sirius didn't realize that Harry was reading at the same level as a normal seventeen year old, therefore all his books were short with lots of pictures. Still every book Sirius had ever given him had a special place on his small bookshelf.

Harry smiled down at the full collection of The Chronicles of Narnia in a box set. Although he had read them several years ago, Harry still appreciated the fact that his god father was at least trying. Sirius must have interpreted his sad smile as something different because he suddenly became very tense.

"Uh, listen Harry I know it isn't much, especially compared to all the other stuff you must have gotten today, but if you want something else I'll get it." Harry's head shot up in surprise, Sirius thought he had gotten presents today? Standing up Harry hugged his godfather tightly.

"I love it Padfoot. It's the best present I've gotten all day." He neglected to mention that it was the only presents he had gotten that day. He didn't want to start any arguments between Sirius and his parents. Harry smiled at his godfather as he excused himself and returned to his room.

A/N Thanks to everyone who put my story on alert. Reviews would inspire me to post the next chapter before Sunday night.

## Chapter 2: Christmas, A few years, and a Wand

Later that night just as Harry was getting ready for bed there was a knock at his door. Harry was stunned, no one ever came into his room. His mother left all his clean laundry outside the door for him and everyone else yelled when they needed him. Cautiously Harry opened the door to find his mother standing nervously on the other side.

"Hello Harry. May I come in?" Harry looked at her cautiously but after a few seconds opened the door wider and let her into the room. He offered his mother the chair at his desk while he sat on his bed.

Mother and Son stared at each other silently for several minutes before Lily finally broke the silence.

"That's a lot of books you have." She gestured towards the large piles of books on and around his small bookshelf which had run out of room long ago.

"Yea, I've been meaning to ask for a bigger bookshelf." His mother glanced at the books on the shelves and only saw the picture books Sirius had given him.

"We'll see what we can do. I came to give you your birthday gift." Harry was genuinely surprised his mother remembered and looked around for a gift she might have brought in.

"Your father and I weren't sure what you wanted for your birthday so we got you some galleons. We're going to Diagon Alley tomorrow and I'll take you somewhere to buy what you want." She pulled five galleons out of her pocket and handed them to Harry.

"Thanks mum." Lily didn't miss the disappointed note in her sons voice or the defeated smile on his face. Not knowing what else to say she got up and made for the door.

"Happy Birthday Harry, I'll see you in the morning." Harry waved goodbye to his mother and he closed the door behind him.

That night was one of the many nights Harry Potter cried himself to sleep, alone.

The next day the Potter's went to Diagon Alley, where they met Sirius and Remus Lupin, Daniel's godfather. Remus hadn't been able to make it to the party yesterday, claiming illness. So now he was spending the entire day with his godson.

While Daniel, James, Sirius, and Remus went to Quality Quidditch Supplies, with Lily following them to make sure they didn't buy anything too expensive. Harry snuck off and using the money his mother had given him bought a full potion set and a cauldron. He made sure that when no one was looking he shrunk his cauldron down to keep it hidden from his parents.

Harry had odd quirks like that. The one thing he desired more than anything was his parents attention and love. Yet he was so afraid that it would look like he was bragging and showing off, he never mentioned his amazing powers. If he had maybe things would have been different.

The years continued to pass for Harry. Now however, there was something good in his life. Ginny. After her first visit with Ron, she became almost a permanent resident at the Potter Household. Together they spent many long afternoons outside or up in Harry's room talking and playing and just being kids. Harry even introduced Ginny to the muggle invention of television.

That Christmas Harry was happily surprised to find not two but three gifts under the tree for him. A book from Sirius, and some candy from his parents as usual. The gift from Ginny however made him gasp loudly, momentarily drawing the attention of his mother.

When she looked over Harry was reverently holding a small picture frame staring intently at the picture in it. He was sitting on the floor a few feet in front of her and she was able to see a picture of he and Ginny waving happily at the camera. She guessed it was taken at the Burrow, since she couldn't remember ever taking a picture like that.

She was a little surprised when Harry distractedly grabbed the candy and book lying on the floor next to him and walked out of the room never taking his eyes off of the picture. She was just about to get up and follow Harry out of the room when Daniel called out excitedly behind her.

"Mum look!" Lily turned around and saw her son holding the guitar he had been asking for. He began poorly mashing his fingers over the strings making a pretty horrible racket. It was however, just enough to make Lily forget the curiosity she had had for her oldest son.

Several months later Harry found the guitar which had stopped his mother from following him. If she had she might have found him crying over the picture, it was after all the first picture he had ever received where he was one of the main focusing points. That picture now held a special spot on the nightstand next to his bed.

Going back to the guitar however, Harry found it in Daniel's toy room several months later. At the time it was covered in dust and many of the strings were broken. Harry took it from the toy room and spent a few nights carefully repairing it, using both magic and the muggle way. Finally he had repaired it good as new.

On the next trip to Diagon Alley Harry bought a book that helped a person teach themselves how to play a guitar. So over the next few months and years, each night Harry would wandlessly place a silencing charm over his room and practice the guitar every night for an hour. He only placed the silencing charm so he didn't disturb the other residents of the house. The only person who knew that Harry played the guitar was Ginny.

In what seemed the blink of an eye three more years passed, and Harry's eleventh birthday approached. Neither Harry nor Ginny were looking forward to Harry leaving for Hogwarts. Ever since his eighth birthday they had never spent more than a week apart. Now facing ten months apart with only the possibility of seeing each other once or twice over the two breaks, had gotten both considerably depressed.

The trip to Diagon Alley went just as Harry had thought it would. Several reporters followed Daniel around documenting how the Boy-Who-Lived bought his school supplies for his first year at Hogwarts. Harry meanwhile snuck off buying several books and some used robes, he figured his parents would probably forget him anyway.

Harry had bought his own potion making set the day after his eight birthday, so he only needed to replenish his supplies. After that he used the money his parents had given him for his birthday, ten

galleons, to buy a beautiful snowy owl that he could send letters to Ginny with. He rejoined his family outside of Ollivanders Wand Shop.

His father was trying to keep the reporters out of the shop and while he was distracted Harry snuck under his arm and into the dimly lit shop. Lily and Daniel were already both in the shop and were surprised when Harry stumbled in carrying a large cage with an owl in it.

"Mum how come Harry got an owl? I want an owl too!" Lily smiled down at Daniel as she answered.

"Of course Daniel, I'll buy you an owl after we get a wand alright." This seemed to placate Daniel who returned to smiling out the window at the one or two reporters who had gotten close enough to take a few pictures through the glass.

A few seconds later James stepped inside the door and closed it tightly behind him. He cast several charms on the door and shut the blinds tightly. Finally once he was sure they were safe he turned back to his family. He seemed mildly surprised that Harry had an owl.

"Harry, where did you get an owl from?" Harry smiled at his father.

"I bought her. I think I'm going to name her Hedwig." Hedwig hooted happily at Harry, but once Harry had given his explanation James turned back to Daniel.

"Well lets get your wand alright son." He looked around the building curiously. "Now where is Ollivander?" As if on cue the old man in question appeared from behind a book case of wands.

"James Potter and Lily Evans how pleasant to see you. This must be young Daniel. May I ask who you are?" The short man looked expectantly at Harry.

"Harry, Harry Potter." Harry was used to having to introduce himself where ever he went and the man seemed to sense Harry's wish to not be noticed.

"Well shall we find these two their wands."



An hour later the Potter family exited the wand shop. Daniel had received a maple wand, ten inches, with a unicorn hair core. Harry had received a redwood wand twelve inches with a phoenix feather as the core. Mr. Ollivander had seemed slightly disappointed when Daniel found his wand, yet mildly excited when Harry chose his. When Harry asked him about his wand he merely said it was a very special wand.

So the rest of the summer passed by much too quickly for Harry's liking. Ginny was over nearly every day trying to fit in as much with her best friend as she could before he left for Hogwarts. Finally the first of September arrived in a flurry of packing and rushing.

A/N

I know it's really short and i actually added a bit to it, but i really want to get to the Hogwarts year. To make it up to you i promise the chapter about Harry's first year later tonight or early tomorrow at the latest, i'm still playing with it.

To Sankalpdeoxys: Thanks for being my first reviewer.

Now to answer some questions:

Phoenixi77: I'm really glad you mentioned Lupin, because despite him being one of my favorite character i totally forgot him, which is why i went back and added that part about the day after their birthday. Lupin will appear more in future chapters.

Panther73110: Yes he's going to Hogwarts, i'm not promising he'll be in Gryffindor but he'll be at Hogwarts.

Comet Moon: Just because you reviewed twice. A little later i'm pushing Molly towards the mother role, but Lily will still be important.

Codyesh2: I'm weird in that i only read Harry/Ginny fics. So it's guaranteed that that's going to happen. As for the soul bond part, who knows... well i do but i don't want to ruin your hopes and dreams. Just a warning i'm probably going to glaze over most of second and third year just to get into the fourth year good stuff, although the diary will still be important.

Reviews are beautiful ways to say you like my story.

### Chapter 3: First Year

The Potters arrived at Platform 9¾ at ten thirty leaving a half hour to spare before the train left. While the rest of his family was swarmed by reporters Harry took his cart and owl and snuck off towards the back of the train. He found an empty compartment and loaded his trunk and Hedwig into it. He sat down making sure he had a clear view of the entrance so he would know when Ginny and her family arrived.

Five minutes before eleven a large group of red heads finally entered through the barrier. Harry was out of his compartment before the last one had even come through. Harry saw Ron walk off towards the crowd gathered around his brother, but only spared him a glance as his eyes were fixed on the youngest Weasley who was looking hopefully around the platform.

When her eyes finally met his she sprinted the last few feet from her mother leaping onto Harry in the desperate hug. Harry was surprised when he felt tears rolling down her face. The Ginny he knew rarely cried.

"I don't want you to go!" Harry hugged her back tightly, not even caring that Mrs. Weasley was staring knowingly at them.

"I don't want to go either. I promise I'll write to you every day." This only seemed to intensify her crying.

"That's what all my brothers say but they never write." Harry pulled back from the hug he had been giving her and looked her right in the eye.

"Ginny Weasley have I ever broken a promise to you once?" Ginny feebly shook her head still sniffing slightly. "Well, I'm not about to start now. You can expect my first letter sometime tomorrow."

"Promise you won't forget me." Harry finally realized why Ginny was so afraid of him leaving without her.

"Ginny, you're my best friend. You're my only friend. I'm not just going to go off and forget you. I could never forget you. I promise that we'll be best friends forever." This seemed to satisfy Ginny and she smiled.

"I'm going to miss you so much."

"I know I'll miss you too, but we'll see each other at Christmas and we'll write everyday." Ginny smiled but before she could say anything the whistle for the train blew and with one last hug Harry leapt onto the train. He made it to his compartment and was able to wave out the window to Ginny as she chased the train while it left the station.

Insert Asterisk Here

September 2nd, 1991

Dear Ginny,

I'm writing just like I promised.

The train ride and the welcoming feast were sooooo boring. I shared my compartment with a boy named Neville. He was nice but very shy. I spent most of the train ride reading that book on animagi you gave me for my birthday. It's really interesting I think we could do it in a few years.

Anyway onto the welcoming feast. You'll never guess who was there. Apparently my mother was given the Ancient Runes teaching position, so now she and my dad are living at the school. Daniel and Ron were sorted into Gryffindor no surprise there.

The sorting hat actually tried to put me into Slytherin saying I would do well there. I managed to convince the hat that I didn't want to go into Slytherin, so it sent me to Ravenclaw. That's right I Harry James Potter am a Ravenclaw. I think my dad was slightly disappointed in me. When I sat down he was staring at me in shock and horror. Mum looked slightly surprised but also a little proud too.

I'm already missing you and I hope you write back soon. I think Hedwig is happy that she finally has someone to deliver messages to. I'll write to you again soon.

Your best friend,

Harry

Insert Asterisk Here

September 14th 1991

Dear Harry,

In response to yesterdays letter, I'm fine. I was a little surprised to hear that Daniel made it onto the Quidditch team at such a young age. I think I agree with you that your father probably did put Professor McGonagall up to it. The other boys in your dorm sound nice.

I don't know why Professor Snape would have a reason to hate you. From what I've heard though he's like that to everyone not in Slytherin.

Mum is going to be furious if you're brother talks Ron, Fred, and George into helping him make another group of Marauders. I still think we could out prank them any day. I know you don't like playing pranks so stop rolling your eyes. I'm just saying that when you put your mind to it you pull the best pranks I've ever seen.

I have to go mum's calling me.

Your Friend,

Ginny

Insert Asterisk Here

October 23rd 1991,

Dear Ginny,

These classes are beginning to get very boring, I'm sure once you get here next year you'll feel the same way. We've read so far ahead that even with learning how to use my wand the spells are still simple to master. I think Professor McGonagall has realized I'm holding back. She was walking around the other day and without realizing it I transfigured my needle without speaking. I really hope she doesn't say anything, you know how much I hate attention.

Even though I've told you a million times that the only friend I think I'd ever need would be you, I've taken your advice and made a friend. His name's Neville Longbottom, the boy I sat with on the train. Well, I saved him from Malfoy yesterday.

You would appreciate how I got Malfoy to bug off. I charmed his shirt to randomly grow and shrink. By lunch it was so small I think he was having trouble breathing, but by dinner he looked like he was wearing a tent.

Anyway, Neville is helping me with my Herbology work, since I'm pretty horrible at it. In return I'm helping him with pretty much everything else. Once you get past the shyness and clumsiness, he's really a nice guy. I think I can safely say you'd like him. Well that's all that's really happened since yesterday.

Love,

Harry

Insert Asterisk Here

October 27th 1991,

Dear Harry

I think I might have found out why Snape hates you. I finally got a letter from Ron yesterday, it only took him about two months. He told me about how your dad and Snape were bitter rivals in school, at least according to your father.

Personally if he's letting a stupid school rivalry affect the way he teaches then he shouldn't be teaching. Although, I asked mum about the potions professor from when she was in school. He was kind of like Snape only instead of just favoring Slytherin's he favored anyone who showed talent or had important family members.

I can't believe Daniel broke your dad's record for most detentions in a month and your father's actually proud of that! It Ron had been a part of even half those detentions mum probably would have sent him a howler by now.

Mum's calling so I've got to go,

Love,

Ginny

Insert Asterisk Here

November 1st 1991,

Dear Ginny,

Our brothers are morons.

Last night during the Halloween feast Professor Quirrell the crazy Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher, burst into the Great Hall screaming about a troll. Dumbledore sent everyone back to their dorms. Ron and Daniel however, had the brilliant idea that they could beat a full grown troll by themselves!

Another girl Hermione Granger found out and chased after them. It's lucky the teachers found them. They were apparently disarmed and cornered by the troll. Daniel broke his arm. He and Ron are insisting the Troll snuck up on them.

How on earth does a troll sneak up on you?

You want to know the stupidest thing of all. Instead of taking points away and getting detention, Dumbledore gave each of them twenty points for showing amazing bravery! They nearly die doing something amazingly stupid and they get rewarded for it!

Write back soon,

Love,

Harry

Insert Asterisk Here

November 4th 1991,

Dear Harry,

Mum is going ballistic. She finally got a letter from Dumbledore telling her what happened that night. His letter only said that Ron and the others had no idea about the troll and showed amazing bravery when suddenly finding themselves against a troll.

I didn't want Ron getting off that easily for something that stupid so I showed mum your letter. She freaked out, I'm pretty sure she's sending a howler. That should make for some very interesting entertainment tomorrow morning.

Nothing else new has happened since yesterday, I think we should maybe start cutting our letters down to once a week or when something interesting happens. I'm running out of things to talk about.

Love,

Ginny

Insert Asterisk Here

January 12th 1992,

Dear Ginny,

I found the most amazing thing today. I was on the 4th floor on my way back from the library and I took a shortcut no one really uses. It leads down this old hallway, no one likes it too much cause its dark and dusty.

Anyway I was walking down this hallway when I walked past this painting. It was a portrait of all Four of the Founders!

According to Hogwarts a History, none of the founders have been seen in the same picture frame, ever! So of course I stopped to talk to them.

It was amazing they said they had been waiting for me and that I was an heir. Then the portrait swung open and behind it was this giant room. Inside there were four more individual portraits of the founders. They started telling me about the room.

It has all sorts of cool stuff. Armor, weapons, books, maps, and anything else you could imagine. I found a complete map of Hogwarts that showed every room, including the offices of the founders and Slytherin's secret chamber.

The founders are going to teach me advanced magic. I made them promise to teach you when you arrive next year. They agreed!

Hoping you write back soon,

Harry

Insert Asterisk Here

January 20th 1992,

Dear Harry,

The things the Founders are teaching you sound amazing. Who would have guessed that the huge epic battle between Slytherin and Gryffindor was a small shouting match between friends? It's nice to know that even though most of his house sounds like gits now, he was at least a decent person.

I'm already missing you again. That one day over Christmas break definitely wasn't long enough.

I've been practicing that book on Occlumency you gave me. It's amazing already I can remember the smallest details from memories of when I was four or five.

I can't believe Snape would try to use legilimency on a student! It's a good thing you've been practicing occlumency and could keep him away from the important memories. Maybe you'll be able to fully shield your mind from him by the time I get there. Imagine the shock he'll get then.

I have to go mum wants me to help degnome the garden.

Love,

Ginny



Insert Asterisk Here

March 1st 1992,

Dear Harry,

Are you insane?

The Founders told you how to brew the potion to find your Animagus form and you told them you'd rather wait for me. You've wanted to become an Animagus since I met you, and you finally get a chance and decide to wait.

I'm not that important Harry, just go ahead and start the training, even with the Founders help it'll probably still take a long time. I'm already learning more than I could ever imagine from your letters. (Which have become more like textbooks, than letters) Imagine what I'll be able to learn once I have my own wand and am actually at Hogwarts.

Onto other matters though, Sirius came by last night. My mum apparently invited Remus and him over, but Remus was sick... again. Well, anyway Sirius kept asking me about you, he said he hasn't gotten a single letter from you. He looked really disappointed. Maybe you should send him a letter every once and a while.

I gave him an edited version of what you've been doing this year. I left out the part about the Founders. He said it sounded like you haven't been having as much fun as Daniel. If only he knew.

That's all I have to write for now,

Love,

Ginny

Insert Asterisk Here

March 2nd 1992,

Dear Ginny,

If you ever say you're not important again I'll hex you. You are important! You're my best friend. If I didn't have you Gin, I don't know where I would be. You know what my families like, I think you're the only thing that's been able to get me through it.

You want to be an Animagus just as much as I do, so I'm going to wait until you get to Hogwarts to start brewing the potion.

You're right about Sirius, I completely forgot about him. Besides you, he's the only one who's ever cared about me before. I'm writing him a letter right after this one and sending it with Hedwig, I'll tell her to drop it off with him before delivering your letter.

Love,

Harry

Insert Asterisk Here

May 23rd 1992,

Dear Ginny,

Professor Quirrell tried to attack Daniel! I don't know how it started but Daniel, Ron, and Hermione apparently went to his office to question him about something. From what I've heard he stunned Ron and Hermione and was threatening to kill Daniel.

Dumbledore and my dad arrived just in time to stop him and they found out Voldemort had possessed Quirrell. I'm not sure what happened after that but Ron, Hermione, and Daniel each got 50 points for amazing detective work as Dumbledore called it.

Ravenclaw was going to win the House Cup and now there's no way any house could catch up!

This is so infuriating! At least schools almost over and then we get to spend all summer together.

See you soon,

Harry

A/N

First off that part about 'insert asterisk here' is because no matter what i do the asterisks i put in to show a break in the story never appear when the chapters uploaded.

Secondly to my amazing reviewers, you are all awesome, so once again i'll answer your questions and such.

Codyesh2: The part about the wand: yes you'll see why in the next chapter. So far we've seen Harry at age 1, 5, 8, and 11. Just wait until those hormones hit then the fireworks are gonna start. I'm pretty sure this chapter answered the part about his house and at least one of his friends.

Padfoot553: He did but i didn't mention, but it does come up in i think two chapters, so don't worry i do talk about it.

Cutieme012: As you can see Snape hates Harry, but that may or may not change. Lupin/Tonks is my second favorite couple, after Harry/Ginny of course. I was so mad when they died.

Whitelonewolf: Sirius and Remus both get more involved in the story later on, like around 4th year. Lily and James do come around eventually, though not at the same time and one may take much longer than the other.

Comet Moon: I was aiming to make Daniel like Dudley, i think i did a good job with the little part about him wanting an owl too. Also Ginny was aware of Harry's training, i tried to make that evident in this chapter. I'd also like to mention she can do some wandless magic but isn't as good as Harry at it.

GinnyLover14: I think J.K. kind of killed Ginny's character in the 7th book. To me Ginny was the strong female character who wasn't afraid to get in a fight, while Hermione was the weaker female character who would rather get a teacher then actually do the fighting herself. That's why i could never really see Hermione with Harry. So when Ginny stayed behind to be the good little girl it didn't make any sense to me.

Once again Thanks to my amazing reviewers, in future chapters i'll have pop culture references for you to guess at, but i'll tell you when that happens. Anyone else like the mindless fluff at the beginning?

## Chapter 4: The Summer/ Diagon Alley Surprises

The Hogwarts Express pulled into Platform 9¾ ten minutes early. Harry however was already waiting in the hallway with his trunk and was off the train almost before it had stopped moving. The second he was off his eyes began eagerly scanning the crowd for his favorite red head.

He saw his parents eagerly waving to Daniel and Ron who were disembarking farther down the train, and then finally saw the rest of the Weasley's standing behind his parents. He began happily making his way through the crowd with his trunk in tow. He made it to within twelve feet of the Weasley's when he realized Ginny wasn't with them.

Harry's head began swiveling around looking as hard as he could for Ginny. Just as he was beginning to panic, thinking she hadn't come, he felt a light tap on his shoulder. Harry spun around only to nearly be tackled to the ground by a red haired object.

"Harry!" Harry hugged her tightly drinking in the smell of her hair as she tried to squeeze the life out of him.

"Ginny! I missed you so much!" Neither noticed the knowing smiles Mr. and Mrs. Weasley were sending both of them.

"Do you think you could come over today Harry?" Mrs. Weasley took this opportunity to step into their little reunion.

"I think Harry might want to go home first Ginny, spend a night with his family. Perhaps tomorrow Harry can come over." Harry and Ginny both looked upset over this news, but reluctantly agreed with her.

The Weasley's and Potter's made their way out into Kings Cross Station. As they went Daniel and Ron began telling the older Weasley's about all their adventures and the Quidditch matches Daniel had played in. The entire time Harry was telling Ginny what had really happened and how Daniel had nearly died several times. He also mentioned that Daniel had only won two of the Quidditch matches and even then just barely. The Hufflepuff seeker had thoroughly destroyed him.

Break

Two days before Harry and Daniel's birthday the Hogwarts letters arrived. With them came the final grades from the previous year. Harry was shocked to find out that he had tied for the highest grade in his year. Ginny didn't seem as surprised saying that he was amazingly brilliant and that he taught her almost everything she knew about magic.

Harry's near perfect grades were once again over shadowed this time by the fact that Daniel had received the highest grade in DADA. Harry briefly wondered if it had anything to do with James grading the final few weeks of school. Harry left his grade sheet on the kitchen table where he had found his parents congratulating Daniel and promising him a present for his good grades. They glossed over the fact that he had been one point shy of failing Potions.

Several hours later as Lily was cleaning the kitchen she found Harry's grade sheet. She was stunned when she saw the grades on the page. She had never done this well in school. Wondering why Harry hadn't mentioned his grades she walked up to his room knocking on the door. Harry opened it looking curiously at his mother.

"Harry, I was wondering why you didn't tell your father and I about these impressive grades." Harry's eyes widened slightly and he looked at the paper in her hand.

"You were busy with Daniel." He said it as though that solved every problem.

"Next time don't be afraid to tell you're father or I that you did so well. I'm proud of you Harry." Harry genuinely smiled at his mother.

"Thanks mum." Harry took the sheet away from her and in an attempt not to say or do anything that would ruin that perfect moment closed his door.

Break

Two weeks later the Potter's and Weasley's went to Diagon Alley to get their new school supplies. While James and Arthur took Daniel, Ron, Fred and George to get their things, Molly and Lily took Harry

and Ginny, who refused to be separated. Harry and Ginny stayed a few yards in front of their parents racing from window to window and talking excitedly over the things inside.

Molly was smiling contentedly at Harry and Ginny's shared excitement while Lily observed her son and his best friend for what felt like the first time. She'd never really paid attention to what they did when Ginny was over. Now she noticed the obvious closeness between them. Ginny didn't let go of Harry's hand as they raced from window to window. Neither seemed to have an area of personal space and were constantly leaning on or over each other to get a better view.

They arrived at Ollivanders, Harry insisting his birthday gift for Ginny be buying her a new wand. Molly had been a little hesitant at first but Harry had made her cave. She'd never admit it, but over the years she had developed a small soft spot when it came to Harry. She practically thought of him as her own son on some days.

"Molly Weasley, Beech, nine inches, with a unicorn hair core. Very good for household charms. I would presume you are here for your daughters wand." Molly nodded her head kindly to the creepy old man.

Twenty minutes later Harry and Ginny left the wand shop very confused. Ginny's wand had been redwood eleven inches with a phoenix feather core. The feather in Ginny's wand had apparently come from the mate of the phoenix who had given the feather for Harry's wand.

Ollivander had explained that since phoenixes mate for life, the power from two wands using a mated pairs feathers as cores would be remarkable. He allowed them to leave mumbling on about how he expected great things from Harry and Ginny.

After Ollivanders they had to go to Flourish and Blott's to meet the others. When they arrived they found a large crowd of people gathered to meet Gilderoy Lockhart. Harry and Ginny had no desire to meet him so they quickly wandered off to an emptier part of the store.

While Daniel Potter was being dragged in front of the cameras by an attention grabbing Lockhart, Harry and Ginny found themselves in a section of books neither had ever seen before.

"Harry look at this one. A History of Blood Rituals and Public Sacrifice." Harry grimaced playfully at Ginny.

"That one sounds gruesome. Listen to this one though. My Husband is an Inferi but I still Love Him!" Harry and Ginny looked at each other for a second before yelling.

"Ewww!" No one was around to notice them however and they quickly broke down into hysterical laughter. Soon they recovered and Ginny picked up another book.

"Hey Harry listen to this one. So you've Created a Soul Bond, Now What?" Harry moved across from Ginny who had opened the book and sat down leaning against the bookcase.

"That sounds interesting, does it say how a person forms a soul bond." Ginny flipped to the front of the book and began scanning the first few pages before speaking.

"It says there's two known ways. If two soul mates find and know each other well from a very young age then the bond will most likely form over time. However, if one soul mate saves the other soul mates life at great risk to their own the bond forms quicker and is much more powerful." She paused reading one paragraph thoroughly.

"Oh there's a spell to determine if two people are soul mates. You want to try it for fun Harry?" Harry laughed lightly but nodded his head excitedly.

Ginny pulled out her new wand and reread the paragraph with the spell instructions carefully. After a few seconds she pointed her wand first at Harry then at herself while saying, "Soulis Pairis." For a few seconds nothing happened. Then dimly at first but getting brighter and brighter as time passed a purple glow began coming from Harry and Ginny. Ginny gasped loudly as the glow continued to brighten.



"Oh Merlin!" Harry looked at Ginny who had a look of total shock and awe on her face.

"Ginny what's this mean?" The glow was getting brighter and brighter with each second, soon they would start attracting attention. Ginny however was already reading the book again.

"It says that a purple glow represents two people who are soul mates and have already begun forming a soul bond. Oh Harry, I didn't think anything would actually happen. I'm sorry." Despite the intensity of the glow around them Harry could see the beginnings of tears in Ginny's eyes and he quickly scooted across the aisle to wrap an arm around her shoulders.

"There's nothing for you to be sorry for. I wanted to cast the spell just as much as you did. This doesn't change anything between us. I was already positive before the spell that I didn't want to live without you. Now I just know that where my heart was pointing me was right." Ginny turned to look at him a small amount of confusion written across her face.

"Ginny, think about what it was like for us just to be apart for a few months. I don't think I could ever take being away from you for that long ever again." Ginny smiled happily up at him.

"I felt the same way. I never missed my brothers as much as I missed you. I barely even noticed Ron was gone because I was thinking about you so much."

The children sank into silence and watched the dancing purple aura around them, slowly a mesh of reds, pinks, and blues began to appear in the aura creating a beautiful display of colors that almost seemed alive. The intensity of the colors continued to grow in brightness, until both were positive someone must have noticed the glowing light coming from between the bookshelves by now. Finally Harry poked the open book in Ginny's hand drawing her attention.

"Does it say how long this aura is supposed to last, or why it's got these other colors in it?" Ginny looked down at the book hastily reading through a few pages. She bit her lower lip nervously before shaking her head. "Oh well hopefully it will go away befo-" As if on cue Mrs. Weasley came around one end of the bookshelves and stopped dead in her tracks staring at the two children.

"Ginny! Harry! What happened to the two of you? Did the twins do this? I'm going to wring their necks when I find them. First your fathers fighting, then Daniel and Ron fighting, and now the twins prank you two." Mrs. Weasley continued going on like this for some time before finally stopping to catch her breathe. Harry took this moment to interrupt.

"What do you mean Daniel and Ron were fighting?" Mrs. Weasley rolled her eyes and huffed loudly glaring at something over the bookcases.

"Daniel and Ron got into a muggle fist fight with Draco Malfoy. While your fathers were busy fighting Lucius Malfoy! All four of them are in serious trouble when we get home. And the twins too for whatever it is they did to you." Harry and Ginny glanced nervously at each other before turning back to Mrs. Weasley.

"Fred and George didn't do this to us mum. We did it to ourselves."

"Well what was the name of the spell so I can remove it from you." Harry and Ginny looked nervously at each other once again before Ginny looked her mother in the eye.

"The spell to detect if two people are soul mates." The effect was instantaneous. While Mrs. Weasley's mouth dropped open as if it had unhinged, her eyebrows shot up into her hairline. The stunned silence was broken a second later as Harry and Ginny received a personal howler.

"YOU DID WHAT? WHY ON EARTH WOULD YOU DO THAT?" Now everyone still in the shop was staring curiously at the woman who was shouting at something that appeared to be glowing in between two bookshelves.

Lily who had been angrily berating her son and husband turned to face the new source of screaming. Curiosity overcame her anger at her husband and son so she cautiously approached the fuming Weasley matriarch. Once she was close enough to see over Molly's shoulder she found Harry and Ginny sitting sheepishly on the floor bathed in some sort of purple aura.

"Molly what's going on?" Molly Weasley turned around to face Lily still very red in the face and made exaggerated hand gestures towards where Harry and Ginny were trying to make themselves as small as possible. Finally she seemed to come to a complete thought and turned to face the other two.

"Finite Incantatem!" Almost instantly the purple aura disappeared and Harry and Ginny breathed a sigh of relief. "Now I want the two of you to stand by our things and not move a muscle. The six of us will be having a conversation on what exactly you two did when we get home."

Harry and Ginny shot up and past Mrs. Weasley and Lily and were standing still as statues next to Ginny's new cauldron less then a second later.

Break

Later as they were leaving the bookshop no one noticed as Harry snuck off quickly to pay for the book on soul bonds.

Break

Three hours later Harry and Ginny found themselves sitting in the living room of the Burrow. Across from them was a very agitated Mrs. Weasley, and a very confused Lily, James, and Arthur Weasley. Mrs. Weasley had just finished setting up a large number of privacy charms when she turned to glare at Harry and Ginny.

"Tell us exactly what you did and why you did it." Ginny and Harry seemed to have a silent conversation with each other before Harry started.

"Well, when we got to Flourish and Blott's there were so many people crowding to see Lockhart that we went to find a quiet place to look at the books." Ginny picked it up here.

"We found this one aisle that was empty and started reading the book titles. Most of them were really gross."

"Then Ginny found a book on soul bonds. It seemed interesting so we started reading it." Lily seemed to catch onto where this was

going and gasped loudly. She didn't say anything though so Harry and Ginny continued.

"I found a spell in it to detect if two people were soul mates. So just for fun I cast it on Harry and I." James and Mr. Weasley both raised their eyebrows, and quickly wiped the smirks off their faces when Mrs. Weasley glared at them.

"So what were the results of this spell?" Lily asked the question seeming genuinely interested in this little test. Harry and Ginny both shared a knowing smile before Ginny spoke first.

"Harry and I are soul mates-"

"And we have the beginnings of a soul bond." This time all four adults were shocked by the news.

All at once three of the four adults began speaking at the same time. Mrs. Weasley began talking about how they were too young. Lily started going on and on about how this couldn't have happened, she would have noticed. Mr. Weasley watched Harry and Ginny's reactions carefully, not really saying anything. James had remained quiet for a second but suddenly stood up.

"I think we should floo Dumbledore. He might be able to tell us what this means." When Mrs. Weasley and Lily immediately began agreeing with James, Mr. Weasley was the only one who noticed the slightly panicked looks Harry and Ginny had.

"Harry, Ginny, is there any reason you don't want the headmaster to know about this?" Ginny gave her father a grateful smile.

"We, well we don't like the headmaster. We think he plays favorites to get important people to like him." She looked pointedly at James and Lily as she said this.

"No offense Ginny, but how would you know? Have you ever even met Dumbledore?" James scoffed. He was slightly surprised when Harry immediately rose to her defense.

"No, but she was as good as there last year. We wrote each other practically every day and I told her everything that happened last year." James was shocked into silence having never seen Harry

actually talk back to him. Mr. Weasley stepped in while James looked at his son in awe and asked his next question.

"What do the two of you think about this?" Harry and Ginny, for what felt like the thousandth time that day glanced at each nervously. Finally Harry warily spoke.

"We agree that this doesn't change anything. Ginny and I were already best friends and hated being apart from each other more than anything else. Now we just know that we were lucky and found the person we want to spend our lives with really young." Ginny grabbed Harry's hand tightly and nodded her head. Suddenly Harry felt a string of thoughts and emotions that weren't his own.

It was like being pulled out of his body and forced to watch through Ginny's eyes. He suddenly knew that she was terrified her parents might try to keep her from seeing Harry. She was even more terrified of what Lily and James might do or say. He knew she was latched onto his hand right now in case anyone tried to take him away from her. Then as quickly as it had started Harry was back in his own body. He tightened his grip on Ginny's hand and smiled at her reassuringly. Then leaned over and whispered in her ear so only she could hear.

"Don't worry Gin, I'll never let them take you away from me." Ginny's eyes widened slightly in surprise before she smiled gratefully at him.

"Well, I don't think Dumbledore needs to know we can just buy that book the two of you were reading and see what it has to say."

"I already bought the book." Harry said as he pulled the book out of a bag by his feet. "Ginny and I want to read it first though." James and Mrs. Weasley looked like they were about to protest but received warning looks from their significant others. Finally Mrs. Weasley spoke up.

"Fine. But you are under no circumstances are you allowed to perform any more spells you find in that book without all of our permission first." Harry and Ginny quickly agreed having no plans to perform any more magic found within the book. Harry however had one more thing to add.

"Can we not tell anyone else about this? I want to keep it a secret for a little while."

"And I don't want the overprotective prats doing something to Harry." Her mother looked slightly frustrated by her language, but all four adults agreed with them.

The conversation died off quickly afterwards and Harry was ushered out by his parents.

Break

During the final two weeks of summer Harry noticed Ginny began carrying around a small black leather book. He brushed it off as merely being a diary one of her brothers had given her. Yet as the summer winded down Ginny's visit's began to thin out, until finally Harry didn't see her for the last three days of summer.

He began to worry, and wondered if maybe she had been scared off by the discovery of their soul bond. He decided to ask her about it on the train tomorrow. He knew that if Ginny didn't want him, he would be more devastated than anything his parents could ever do to him.

A/N

I hope you enjoyed this chapter. I know some might think the soul bond was unnecessary but i'm just trying to show the true closeness between Harry and Ginny. Also it won't be one of those immediate knowing everything in each others heads type slow bond it will happen slowly and over time, with only one major on set a little later. I'm sure some of you can figure out why that might happen.

So one with the q&a:

Comet Moon: Luna's going to make an appearance in the next chapter and then become more important over the next few chapters.

Brightfeather: I knew that doing all of first year in letters would present a lot of questions but i did it anyway. Daniel did get the invisibility cloak, which will appear later.

Cutieme012: Sirius is Harry godfather, i mentioned it in chapter 1 or 2, even i forget when i said it but i know i did. Something about Sirius being the only one to give him a christmas present.

Codyesh2: Ginny still gets the Diary as shown at the end of this chapter. I tried to show in the last chapter that Lily, James, and Daniel were being mobbed by reporters and BWL fans so they forgot about Harry, by this point he's so used to it and he was so upset about having to leave Ginny behind he barely even noticed. The letter to Sirius would have been added, if i hadn't added that entire part about Sirius not five minutes before i posted the chapter. Harry's explosion is coming.

Harry Foureyes: I also have yet to see a single Harry Neglected fic finished, usually the author writes to the final battle and then stops. James i thought would act like that too, if you notice in the prologue James checks on Daniel first and even though Daniel is crying Lily leaves him to James and goes straight to Harry. I tried to show that whenever Lily doesn't consciously realize what she's doing to Harry, cause as you mentioned shes concerned for Daniel. If you go back and look almost every time Lily had the chance to realize something is wrong, Daniel or someone else will do something that will distract her and it will slip her mind. Hermione, well thats an interesting one... You can't really see it in the first year letters but in second year it will become more obvious. Hermione fell into the same trap Lily and James did. She let herself be blinded by the fame and popularity that comes with being friends with Daniel. When she almost dies trying to fight a troll, she isn't expelled for her own stupidity, she's rewarded. She goes from a shy geek with almost no friends, to being popular simply because she was on an adventure with Daniel. I hope that explains it, that will probably show itself in two or three chapters.

Hiharrypotter: Harry and Ginny will be showing their advanced magic off this year, i'll have a few paragraphs about their training from the Founders. Year 2 will be a few chapters long, i'm not entirely sure how many probably 3 or 4, but year 3 will definitely be one chapter, if not a few paragraphs at the beginning of the year 4 chapters. Horcruxes... probably not, i never liked the idea of a horcrux hunt, but the story will go past year 4 most likely to year 6. Snape hates Harry and Daniel, i hoped the letter from Ron explaining why Snape seemed to hate Harry alluded to the fact that

Ron only knew because Daniel had wanted to know why Snape hated him. You'll have to see about his forgiveness.

A lot of people asked about Quidditch, Harry is not on the team. He might be in the future, but no promises. I know a lot of you hate me right now. I tried to point out that Harry loved flying but he and Ginny both find brooms too confining, hence their desire to be animagus.

Reviews are nice, hope i answered all your questions. Update tomorrow, hopefully if not you'll have to wait til Wednesday, sorry.

Chapter 5: Train Confrontation/ Ginny's Sorting/ The first attack

When Harry and his family arrived at Platform 9¾ it was only to discover that for once the Weasley's had actually beaten them there. Harry was crushed when he found that instead of waiting for him, Ginny had already disappeared somewhere on the train. He rushed off so quickly to find Ginny he never noticed the small panic being caused by his brother's inability to enter the platform.

When Harry found Ginny she was alone in a compartment scribbling furiously in the diary he had seen her carrying around. He thought it was odd since he'd never seen her so interested in a diary before. She was so absorbed in her writing she didn't even acknowledge Harry when he entered the compartment. Or when he loudly collapsed into the seat across from her. Finally Harry grew impatient.

"Ginny." He was slightly surprised when he still received no response so he tried again only a little louder. "Ginny!" Still nothing, so he went for the fool proof method. "GINERVA MOLLY WEASLEY!" That did the trick. Ginny visibly jumped and her head shot up.

"What?" She snapped, but stopped mid sneer when she saw Harry. Her gaze softened a little. "Oh hi Harry." Before Harry could say anything however Ginny had returned to her diary.

"Ginny I want to talk to you." Ginny made no outward signal to show she had heard Harry. "Ginny?" By this point Harry was thoroughly fed up with being ignored. So, he reached across the compartment and pulled the diary of out Ginny's hands closing it and then sitting on it.



"Harry give me that back right now!" Ginny was looking slightly panicked and jumped on Harry trying to get the diary back. Harry however refused to budge.

"Not until you tell me what's wrong." Ginny stopped struggling and looked at him in confusion.

"Nothing's wrong Harry."

"Then why have you been ignoring me for the last three days?"

"I-I've been busy."

"So busy you couldn't wait for me before getting on the train?"

"I'm sorry, I guess I just got caught up in all the excitement of riding the train myself for the first time." Harry stared at her for a second as if trying to see if she was telling the truth. Finally he shrugged and seemed to accept her explanation.

"Ok, but you're still not getting your diary back until we get to Hogwarts."

"Why not?" Harry raised an eyebrow.

"Because you were ignoring me entirely while I was trying to talk to you."

"I was not!"

"Then what did I say when I entered the compartment?" Ginny scrunched up her face in concentration for a second before looking nervously at Harry.

"I-I don't know." Harry looked pointedly at her. "Ok fine I was ignoring you, but you don't understand."

"What don't I understand?"

"The diary, it's just so interesting, if you let me see it I'll show you what it does." This caught Harry's attention slightly. He had of course heard of magical diaries(a/n in a good way not an evil soul

stealing way), and wondered what this one did that was so interesting.

"Alright I'll give it back, I'm kind of curious as to what it does that's so much more interesting than everyone else." Harry handed the diary back to Ginny who had somehow ended up in his lap while trying to get the diary. Blushing she slipped off his lap into the seat next to him.

"OK watch this." Ginny pulled out a quill and opened the diary to the first page. Harry was surprised that the entire book was blank even though he could swear he'd seen Ginny writing furiously in it just five minutes ago. Carefully Ginny wrote on the first page.

'Hello Tom I'm back, sorry for that interruption.' Harry had enough time to glance questioningly at Ginny before the ink on the page disappeared and new words began forming on their own.

'No problem Ginny, may I ask what caused it?'

'Harry grabbed you away from me, he said I was ignoring him. Now he's sitting here watching me write to you, he looks kind of stunned.' Ginny looked up and smiled at Harry, then looked back down to see what this Tom person was writing back.

'Harry, you mean Harry Potter, The Boy-Who-Lived's brother? I thought you said he was your friend, why would he be trying to take me away from you?' Harry scowled down at the diary, first for mentioning him in association with his brother, something he'd grown very tired of, and secondly for insinuating that Harry was trying to hurt Ginny.

'Harry just didn't understand Tom. Besides I was being kind of rude.'

'Maybe or maybe he's just jealous that I'm more interesting than him.' By this point Harry had had enough and once again pulled the book out of Ginny's hands slamming it shut.

"Harry!" Harry held up his hand silencing her.

"No Ginny, I don't like this book it's unnatural. What was it your dad said, never trust anything if you can't see its brain. Well, I don't trust this Tom thing. Please Ginny, promise me you won't keep writing in

this book." Ginny looked torn glancing back and forth between the book in Harry's hand and Harry's pleading face. Harry tried to hide the disappointment that Ginny actually had a hard time choosing between him and the diary.

"Fine." Harry's eyes snapped up to meet Ginny's. "I won't write to Tom anymore."

"Promise." Ginny glared at him angrily.

"Why do I have to promise? Do you not trust me?" Harry could see the hurt in her eyes, but knew he had to do it.

"I trust you Ginny, it's just that this is a big deal. I don't like this diary, there's something not right about it." Ginny could see the seriousness in his eyes, and sighed in defeat.

"Fine Harry. I promise I won't write to Tom anymore." Harry let out a breathe he didn't know he had been holding.

"Thank you Ginny." He stood up and put the diary in his trunk, and knew Ginny was following his every movement. "I'm going to go get changed into my robes, you might want to do the same."

Harry took his second hand robes and went to the closest bathroom to change leaving Ginny alone to change in the compartment. While Harry was gone Ginny did more than just change, she also took the diary back from Harry's trunk placing it deep inside her own.

Break

Harry and Ginny disembarked the train together but were forced to separate when Hagrid called over all the first years. Harry wound up sharing a carriage with Neville Longbottom, and two boys from his dorm Michael Corner, and Terry Boot. Neville had been Harry's only real friend last year after Neville's roommates in Gryffindor had failed to see the potential in the normally quiet and reserved boy.

All to soon they had arrived at the castle and Harry was settling into his normal seat. Along the Head Table he quickly spotted his mother who was having a very animated conversation with Professor Flitwick, next to his mother his father sat wearing bandages over his nose. Harry briefly wondered why his nose was bandaged before

looking farther down the table and finding Gilderoy Lockhart. Harry grimaced at the thought of that man teaching, knowing his type most of his tests would be on his favorite hair care products and other stupid things.

A few minutes later the first years were led in by Professor McGonagall. Harry waved happily to a nervous looking Ginny, she was standing next to a very dazed looking blond girl. Harry and Ginny had discussed which house she wanted to be placed in. Her first wish was Ravenclaw with Harry, but she thought she wasn't smart enough to get in.

Harry knew Ginny was as intelligent as he was, if not more. He'd found her recent lack of faith in her own abilities and self-worth rather disturbing. Whenever she tried to belittle herself he would instantly tell her to stop thinking that way and then tell her how brilliantly amazing she was, even providing many examples. Nothing seemed to be working however and she continued to be in this funk.

While Harry was busy mulling over Ginny's self image problems, many of the first years had been sorted. In what felt like less than a minute to Harry, Ginny was sitting down on the stool and having the hat placed over her head.

Harry watched in a mix of nervous anticipation as Ginny first looked horrified then very relieved. A few seconds later and she was smiling broadly, whispering something to the hat. After her short conversation with the Hat, it opened it's mouth and shouted loudly, "RAVENCLAW!"

The Gryffindor table seemed shocked. Every Weasley for the past two centuries had been in Gryffindor, and now the first girl in seven generations was a Ravenclaw! Harry however was ecstatic, and one of those cheering the loudest, as his best friend and soul mate came over and sat down next to him.

"Congratulations Gin!" Harry hugged her tightly as the students around them congratulated Ginny.

"Thanks Harry. That stupid hat tried to put me in Slytherin! Then it felt kind of like it was tickling my brain, and it said that even though I would do well there it wasn't foolish enough to try and split up a bonded pair. After that it talked about me being curious and

inquisitive which are all good traits for Ravenclaw. I'm so happy I was put here." Harry couldn't help the look of awe on his face. Ginny had managed that in what seemed like one breathe.

"Ginny breathe!" Her face had begun to turn a little blue, and at Harry's words she began gasping in air. Once she'd calmed down, Harry risked a look at the Gryffindor table to see how her brothers were taking all this. Daniel and Ron were talking animatedly about something, neither seemed to have noticed Ginny's sorting. The twins caught Harry's eye and at his questioning glance smiled supportively at him. Percy was too involved in lecturing the new first years to notice Harry looking at him.

"Don't worry about your brothers, it looks like Ron and Percy haven't noticed yet, and the twins are probably more disappointed that you got placed in the know-it-all house than anything else." Ginny smiled gratefully at Harry, and was about to say something when the food appeared on the plates in front of them.

Harry was busily helping himself to a plate full of turkey and mashed potatoes when a girl next to Ginny spoke loudly in his direction.

"You may want to be careful, you have several hook fanged rasgnats living in your hair." Harry turned and was surprised to meet the light gray eyes of the blonde girl who had been standing next to Ginny. Then what she had said registered in his head.

"Um... what?" The girl smiled dreamily at him.

"Hook fanged rasgnats, their small creatures that are a mix between a pixie and a centaur, they live in very messy hair. It reminds them of the forests." Harry stared blankly at the girl. A quick glance around allowed him to confirm that everyone else within hearing range was also looking at the girl in utter confusion. Then he his eyes feel on Ginny who was struggling in vain to hold in her laughter.

"Ginny do you have something you want to say?" Every head in hearing range turned to look at the shaking red head. Once she's calmed down she looked very seriously at Harry.

"Harry this is Luna. And that was Luna-speak for saying she likes your hair." Harry's mouth fell open as he looked once again at the

dazed looking blonde. This time however he could plainly see the ghost of a smile on her face.

"Hi Luna, I'm Harry. I like your hair too, although it looks a little too straight for Hook fanged rasgnats to enjoy living in." Luna smiled at him as she nodded slightly before returning her attention to her food.

Ginny smiled appreciatively at him, and for the briefest of seconds he could swear he felt a sense of relief that wasn't his own. It reminded him of what had happened when they were discussing the soul bond with their parents. He wondered if Ginny had felt anything like that.

He was just about to ask when Dumbledore stood up calling for attention.

Break

Meanwhile an hour earlier at the Gryffindor table...

Daniel Potter had been sitting by himself for almost twenty minutes at the Gryffindor table. He wasn't used to being alone. It felt like no matter where he went either his parents or reporters and fans were gathered around him. Now however, the closest people were at the Head Table, nowhere near close enough for him to talk to without shouting.

Finally after what had seemed like an eternity the doors to the Great Hall opened and students began streaming in. It only took about two minutes for Ron, Hermione, Seamus, Dean, Parvarti and Lavender, to take their normal seats around him. Even though Ron was his best mate he still kept up a very good friendship with the other people in his year.

"Oi Daniel! Where were you? We couldn't find you on the train." Daniel smiled at Ron and went into full story telling mode. Remus, his godfather, had named it that. Whenever Daniel told a story people just seemed to gravitate towards him, and hang on his every word.

"You'll never believe this Ron!" Seeing he had all his year mates attention he dove right into the story. "We got to the platform and were on our way to the barrier. When we got there, Harry rushed

through before the rest of us had a chance. Anyway I went next with my dad. Only when I got there the barrier had sealed itself." Parvarti and Lavender gasped in horror, playing the part of a good audience. Daniel nodded appreciatively towards them, causing both to blush.

"So anyway I hit the barrier full sprint with my luggage cart and poor Daniel Jr.'s cage goes flying. Scared the living daylights out of the poor bird. My dad got it the worst though. Walked right into the barrier and broke his nose, see he's wearing bandages right now." Everyone turned to look at James who was sitting next to Lily at the Head Table. Seeing his audience James waved and tried to smile but ended up clutching his nose in pain.

"So anyway, mum came running up to us and started checking me to see if I was alright. Dad tried to heal his own nose but with his broken nose mispronounced the spell and accidentally vanished all the cartilage in his nose. That's why he's wearing the bandages. Anyway by now all the muggles were looking at us funny. It's a good thing all of them were looking at me so they missed my dad using magic." Once again he received appreciative gasps at the thought of muggles seeing magic.

"Well, my mum and I couldn't figure out what was wrong with the barrier. It was solid as a rock and nothing we did could breach it. So mum, dad, and I had to apparate back home. Only when we tried to apparate they couldn't. Mum and Dad thought it was a Death Eater trap." More appreciative gasps from his audience. "Don't worry if any of those losers had shown up I would have dealt with them the same way I dealt with You-Know-Who."

"Either way we got out of there as quickly as we could. Once we made it out of the building we tried apparating again and mum and dad were able to. I side-along apparated with dad. Well, once we got home mum and dad said I could just floo to school with them. They think that it was some sort of warning. So from now on I'm going to have a body guard whenever we're on the train. I asked for Remus or Sirius." Daniel timed his story perfectly and just as he finished, the food appeared on the table.

As Daniel ate he began thinking about a conversation he had had with his father earlier that week.

"Hey Ron, I need some help with something." Ron looked up curiously though still managing to shovel food into his mouth.

"Ya may" Daniel was by this time very fluent in Ron-talking-with-his-mouth-full speak.

"I was talking to my dad and he said that it was during second year that he started to fancy mum. So I've been thinking and I think it's time I got a girlfriend." Ron seemed slightly stunned by the proclamation, which was evidenced by his raised eyebrows and that fact that his fork had paused for a few seconds on the way to his mouth. Ron finally swallowed what was in his mouth.

"Well, who did you have in mind?"

"My dad says Potter men always fall for red-heads, ever since my great-great-great-great-great-great-great Grandfather Archibald Potter." Ron furrowed his brow in concentration.

"Well, there's not many red-heads in Hogwarts. The only two I know are Susan Bones, and Ginny." Daniel glanced around the Great Hall quickly.

"Well what about that girl at the Ravenclaw table she has red hair." Ron looked across the hall to the red-head sitting at the Ravenclaw table.

"I don't know probably a first year, I've nev-" Ron stopped as he squinted trying to look closer at the girl. Then he looked up and down the table in mild confusion. Finally he leaned out over the table and looked to the twins who were sitting several seats away.

"Oi Fred, George!" The two identical faces turned to their brother. "Why's Ginny sitting at the Ravenclaw table?" Both twins gave Ron incredulous looks. Finally George began.

"It's so wonderful,"

"To see you paid the least attention possible to,"

"Our dear sisters sorting,"

"For if you had dear brother,"



"You would have noticed that,"

"Ginny is now a,"

"Ravenclaw!" Both finished together. Ron's jaw dropped until it was practically resting on the table.

"B-But Ginny can't... not in centuries... Supposed to be Gryffindor... Potter!" Daniel looked at Ron in confusion.

"What did I do Ron?" Ron was red in the face by now and glaring at someone at the Ravenclaw table.

"Not you Daniel. You're brother! This is his fault! I know it, he brainwashed Ginny against being a Gryffindor. Now a family tradition has been broken! The only thing that we Weasley's have been able to say in recent history is that we're a proud family of the light. But now with Ginny in Ravenclaw that's ruined!" Daniel had lost track of Ron's chain of thought long ago.

"What are you talking about Ron? Ravenclaw is a light sided house, just like Gryffindor and Hufflepuff. Slytherin's the only one you have to worry about." Ron shook his head vigorously.

"No! After Slytherin, Ravenclaw turned out the most Death Eaters when You-Know-Who was around. Hufflepuff's were too loyal and Gryffindor's are only light sided. If Ginny's in Ravenclaw then that associates the Weasley name with a semi-dark house. It ruins everything!" Everyone nearby was looking at Ron as though he had been hit on the head with a bludger... several times.

"Ron are you ok?" Hermione was looking worriedly at the red-head.

"No I'm not ok! Ginny is a Ravenclaw! And it's all that bloody Harry Potter's fault!" Ron was now beginning to attract attention from the other nearby house tables, so Daniel quickly clamped a hand over his mouth.

"Ron shut up! You're only going to embarrass yourself, trust me."

Before either could answer however Dumbledore rose and called attention to himself...

Break

Two weeks later...

Harry's first two weeks of lessons had passed quickly. Lockhart was as he had guessed, a total and complete moron. Harry had had to save his class from a flock of Cornish Pixies the man had unleashed on them.

Snape had been a bit of a surprise. Instead of his normal snide remarks about Harry's potions, even if they were perfect, he had just passed by Harry's cauldron without a word and once Harry had thought he'd even seen him nod appreciatively. Another surprise was that Snape hadn't once tried to use legilimency on him which had been a common occurrence last year.

The rest of his classes had been almost the same as last year. The only real difference was that last year he had had a friendly competition with Hermione in Charms and Transfiguration, the only two classes he shared with the Gryffindor's. This year however when he had beaten her in transfiguring his toad into a teapot, she had sneered at him in almost pure hatred.

Hermione wasn't the only one acting odd. In the past Harry and Ron had treated each other as friendly acquaintances. This year Ron, for some reason was angry at Harry. Whenever they saw each other Ron would sneer at Harry, and always seemed like he wanted to say something but another Gryffindor, usually Fred, George, or Daniel would grab him and pull him away.

He had only managed to get to the Founders Room twice, and both times Ginny had been too bogged down in homework to accompany him. He wasn't entirely sure how she had so much homework, he certainly couldn't remember having that much homework in his first two weeks of school.

Either way he needed a good nights sleep that night, tomorrow was the first test of the year in Potions.

Break

Harry opened his eyes and realized almost at once that he was in some sort of dream. The world around him was dulled, almost black and white. He was somewhere on the Hogwarts grounds heading towards Hagrid's hut. Almost instinctively he somehow knew that he wasn't in his own body. He couldn't control his movements or mouth.

As he neared Hagrid's hut he deviated slightly until he was walking straight towards the chicken coops down the hill from Hagrid's. A wand suddenly appeared in his hand, it looked very familiar but he just couldn't place it. With a casual flick towards Hagrid's he heard a raspy voice, "Silencio."

Then it began.

Harry was forced to watch, a prisoner in whatever body he was residing in. The person, whoever it was, entered the first chicken coop and began brutally killing the chickens. Cutting curses and Reductors tore through the chickens until there were none left alive in the coop.

There were still two coops left however and Harry had to watch as one by one all the chickens and roosters were slaughtered mercilessly. Then as quickly as it had began the person left the coops cancelled the silencing charm on Hagrid's and began returning to the school. Harry was still pulled along for the ride all the way up until the person entered the Entrance Hall. Then just before the dream ended a lock of red hair fell into the persons eyes.

Harry sat straight up in bed gasping loudly and looking around in confusion. That dream had been so real and yet surreal at the same time. He glanced at the clock, it was just after three am. His breathing began to slow, but the dream, or nightmare really, began replaying his head. He just couldn't get that red hair out of his mind, it looked so familiar.

It couldn't be though, a mans voice had cast those spells. Definitely not a girls voice. Plus his Ginny could never do something as horrible as that...

A/N

You all owe me one, i was up til 3am last night writing this one, i think it's the longest chapter yet. There is no way i'll be able to get

the next chapter before thursday night at the earliest, but i wouldn't hold your breathe. Check back friday and i'll probably have it up.

I realized i can review my own story, so i might post a review if i have to move back the next chapter or think theres an important question that needs to be answered. So you might want to check the reviews Thursday to see if i can get it out that night. Now onto how Ginny got the diary:

Ginny didn't have her books with her in the soul bond aisle with harry and her. They were still over by her family in the cauldron, just like in the book. So Lucius could easily have picked up one of her books trying to ridicule her family.

Now to answer more questions from my awesome reviewers.

Codyesh2: Seriously are you spying on me? If so stop you might ruin the surprises. I'll give you one hint as to why Daniel and Harry might get into a fight. Unfortunately i've made an executive decision to move that back to third year, which will now be one chapter about Harry screaming at everyone.(except Ginny of course)

Wandsandhands: As you can see the diary has an effect on Harry through the bond, but that won't happen every time, otherwise how would Harry save Ginny.

Comet Moon: I'm trying to make the diary more like a drug and Ginny's addicted to it.

Hiharrypotter: 3 forms each 1 is shared, i'm not telling what they are feel free to guess. At least one ability, which is really amazingly super awesome will transfer but it will take a while, like beginning of fifth year. I'm not really sure how Dobby could train Harry/Ginny he's a house elf i thought the magic was different. Hope i answered the part about the diary. Ha 2 chapters... maybe this weekend since i'm house sitting and won't have anything better to do, but i've reached the end of where i'd already written and now i'm writing the chapters as i upload them. So the time in between is going to increase. That or the chapters will get smaller.

Hpfanficaddit327: I can't say it will ruin the few surprises i have left.

Harry Foureyes: Harry's taking Ancient Runes/Arthimancy, Third year is his explosion and reconciliation with one family member. So just three chapters i think... Ginny's possession won't last the entire year, i'm not saying when it will end but don't expect it to go past Christmas, Harry's too smart and the clues are too obvious. Hermione's friendship with Daniel/Ron goes both ways. They depend on her for grades and she depends on them for popularity and a small amount of fame.

Padfott553: That's just because Daniel was there and you have to remember he doesn't know the whole prophecy just that it could be Daniel, Harry or Neville. In fourth year you'll see what happens when he goes for Harry.

Whitelonewolf: Yes, Maybe, Quite Possibly, Of Course

Ginnylover14: Hope i answered that above.

Poshini: Harry is amazingly intelligent, he could most likely easily pass his OWLs right now. Hence him being in Ravenclaw, he's been reading textbooks and high school level books since he was five.

As always reviews are nice. As an added bonus our first pop culture reference is in this chapter. It's a slightly altered Star Wars quote spoken by Vader. First person to get it has the next chapter dedicated to them. bonus points for naming the original quote and the altered version in this chapter. Next chapter: Hermione meets Colin/ Introducing the Founders/ The Chamber

## Chapter 7: Hermione/ Advice/ The Chamber!

The next morning at the Head Table, Harry noticed an uneasy tension between several of the Professor's and the noticeable absence of Hagrid. What concerned Harry the most was that Ginny looked dead on her feet, as if she hadn't slept at all the night before.

"Gin, are you alright?" Ginny turned to look at him mid yawn and nodded tiredly. "Did you sleep well last night?"

"Like a baby, I barely even remember getting in bed."

"Oh, alright..." Harry returned to his meal, but watched Ginny carefully out of the corner of his eye. She yawned sixty-four times during breakfast. He counted.

Break

Meanwhile at the Gryffindor table...

Hermione sat by herself. It was a Sunday and therefore Daniel and Ron had slept in and wouldn't be down for another hour. In the meantime Hermione was busily eating and reading ahead in her Transfiguration textbook. She was determined to beat Harry during tomorrow's lesson. She was disturbed from her reading by a loud clatter across from her. A new first year was trying to get an incredibly large and ornate camera off his neck. When he noticed Hermione's irritated glare on him he smiled and held out his hand.

"My names Colin, Colin Creevey. This is where Daniel Potter usually sits right?" Hermione rolled her eyes, another fan wanting an autograph.

"Yes, Daniel usually sits over there." She waved distractedly towards a plate two spots away.

"Wicked! Are you really his friend?" Hermione had become used to the attention since last year, but it was always fun getting a new little fan boy to follow her around.

"Why yes, I helped him save the Sorcerer's Stone from You-Know-Who." The small hyper boys mouth fell open in awe.

"Really? Can you tell me about it?" Hermione smiled predatorily, pulling another helpless fan boy into her trap.

"Well, we knew from a few slips made by Mr. Potter that the Headmaster was hiding a powerful artifact somewhere in the school. Then one night when we were out going to duel a no good Slytherin, have to keep them in their place you know, we stumbled upon a giant three headed dog!" Colin gasped appreciatively.

"Well we escaped from the dog, thanks to my mastery of all the first year spells. Well anyway throughout the year we found out more clues from slips by Hagrid and Mr. Potter. In the end we realized that someone was trying to steal the Sorcerer's Stone. It could only be one of the teachers." Another shocked gasp.

"At first we thought it was Snape because he hates Daniel. Then when we went to Mr. Potter, he said it couldn't be Snape because he had helped him stop someone from jinxing Daniel's broom during the first Quidditch Match. Then I remembered overhearing Professors Snape and Quirrell arguing over something and realized that Snape must suspect Quirrell of trying to steal the Stone." Colin was hanging on her every word by this point, totally enthralled by her story.

"Well, Daniel, Ron, and I went and confronted Quirrell. He used really dark magic and knocked both Ron and I out. Daniel and he were locked in an intense duel. What we didn't know was that Quirrell had been possessed by You-Know-Who!" Another gasp, only this time more than one. Looking around Hermione realized that most of the other Gryffindor first years had come down and were listening intently to her story.

"So Daniel and Quirrell were dueling fiercely and Quirrell was about to win, after all he knew much darker magic than Daniel could ever imagine and Daniel was only a first year. Just as Quirrell was about to kill Daniel, Headmaster Dumbledore and Mr. Potter burst in! Together with Daniel's help they managed to beat Quirrell and banish You-Know-Who's soul." There was a loud whoosh of air as the surrounding first years exhaled the breaths they had been holding.

"The Headmaster was so proud of our detective work and Daniel's dueling skills, he awards us fifty points each and that helped us beat

Slytherin and Ravenclaw for the house cup last year." Several of the first years began clapping excitedly, Colin easily the loudest.

"Now I really must return to my studies so I can help Daniel the next time some pathetic Death Eater shows his face." The first years seemed to take the hint and Hermione was allowed to peacefully return to her textbook, while Colin sat excitedly across from her waiting for Daniel.

Break

As the next month passed Harry began noticing odd behavior from Ginny. Some days she looked like she wasn't exactly sure where she was or what was going on. As the end of October approached Harry began seeing her only at meal times and in passing in the common room. She started going to bed earlier and earlier. Harry was afraid she was avoiding him for some reason.

Not knowing what else to do, Harry turned to the only adult figure he thought he could trust, Sirius.

Dear Sirius,

I need your help. Ever since we came to Hogwarts Ginny has been acting differently. It seems like she's trying to distance herself from me. Well, she sits next to me at meals, and we do our homework together, but besides that I almost never see her.

I'm not sure if I did something, or what's wrong. I asked her once and she said it was nothing and that she was just being overwhelmed by her first year work, but I just don't know.

Please Sirius help me, I don't know what I'd do if she didn't want to be my friend anymore.

Your godson,

Harry

Harry only had to wait a single day before receiving a response from Sirius, although it wasn't very enlightening.

Dear Harry,



I was surprised that you would be writing to me for advice. I thought you'd ask your parents first. I'll do my best as your godfather to try and help you though.

Ginny may be telling the truth, first year can seem just as stressful as fifth or seventh year sometimes. She's in a new place, making new friends, with neither of her parents nearby, plus she's learning real magic for the first time. I'd say just give her sometime to adjust. There's another reason but you might not like it.

Harry, I hope you understand that as people get older, things change. I hate to say it, but people change. Sometimes for the good, sometimes for the bad. Before I went to Hogwarts my best friend was my brother Regulus. Once we got to Hogwarts though we started hating each other. I still look back on my memories of our childhood fondly and try to remember him as he was then, not as the Death Eater he would become later in life.

I'm NOT saying Ginny will become a Death Eater. I'm just trying to say that people change and sometimes friends just drift apart. I know it will hurt at first pup, but if that's truly what's happening the pain will dull and as you begin making new friends you'll be able to look back on all the good times you had with Ginny and smile.

I hope that helped.

Love,

Sirius.

Harry smiled at his godfathers letter. It didn't really help him, but it was nice to see that Sirius was willing to try. He just didn't know that Harry and Ginny were soul bonded, therefore they shouldn't be growing apart like this.

Break

On Halloween Harry waited patiently in the Common Room for Ginny, expecting to go to the Feast with her. However, a few minutes before the feast one of her dorm mates came down. He thought she'd introduced herself as Tracy.

"Hi Harry. Ginny sent me to tell you she's not feeling well. She's not going to the feast. Sorry." The girl walked past him and out of the common room.

Harry now knew for certain that Ginny was avoiding him. For one thing he had seen her just an hour ago and she had been fine. Secondly she had been looking forward to her first Hogwarts Halloween feast since she had been old enough to understand what her brothers were talking about. To find out that Ginny was willing to skip the feast to avoid him was like a punch in the gut.

Blinded by pain of rejection Harry left the common room not looking where he was going. All he felt was the mounting depression from being abandoned by his only true friend. Harry didn't even realize where he was going until he stumbled through the portrait and collapsed into a ball in the middle of the Founder's Room.

"Harry-dear what's wrong?" Rowena was at the edge of her portrait gazing worriedly at the boy she had come to think of as a grandson. Around her Godric, Sal, and Helga were in similar positions.

"She hates me." It seemed to unlock something and the boy began sobbing hysterically. The Founders could do nothing physical to help the crying boy, so they waited until he had calmed down a bit.

"Who hates you Harry?" Helga was being as gentle as possible with him.

"Ginny." All the founders looked at each other in utter confusion.

"Harry, I thought you said that the two of you were soul bonded." Godric said.

"We are, but I don't know what's going to happen now." Harry had stopped crying and was now talking in a dead tone, though he was still curled up in a fetal position.

"Then she can't hate you. It's part of being soul bound, it's impossible for either of you to hate each other. Something else must have happened." Harry made little response to this only turning his head to look hopefully at Salazar who had been speaking.

"But she's ignoring me and faked being sick to avoid going to the Halloween feast with me."

"How do you know she's faking?" Rowena was surprised when Harry began laughing quietly to himself.

"Not even Voldemort himself could have kept Ginny from her first Halloween Feast."

"We'll have to find out what's wrong then. I personally think you should go tal-" Salazar stopped suddenly drawing everyone's attention. He looked off to the side of his portrait, almost like he was watching something. Then quite suddenly turned back to the group. "I'll be back in a moment."

Almost before he had finished speaking he had run out of his portrait and disappeared. Harry sat up looking at the other portraits questioningly. None of them had any answers as to Sal's strange behavior however and they all waited patiently for him to return. They didn't have to wait long.

Salazar Slytherin, the epitome of pureblood appearance and manners, looked like he had been mugged. Sal ran back into his picture his hair loose and flying around his face, his medieval suit was unkempt and looked like he had fallen in it. His face was pale and he was 'breathing' heavily.

"Harry you must go quickly! Ginny's been possessed by some book. She's just gone down into the Chamber, I believe whatever is controlling her may be trying release the basilisk." Harry was on his feet and running almost before Sal had finished talking.

Harry knew where the entrance to the Chamber was, he just didn't know how he was going to get in. According to Sal only a parselmouth could open the Chamber. All Harry knew for certain was that Ginny was in danger and Merlin himself couldn't stop him from reaching her. As he rushed towards the bathroom door it flew open straining on it's hinges. He briefly wondered if he had done that as he slid to a stop in the bathroom.

"Open!" Nothing happened.

"Open you stupid sink!" Still nothing.

"Harry if you'll allow me." Harry spun to find Sal watching calmly from a mirror nearby.

"How?" Sal smiled at him.

"A small trick we Founders can do in the school. Now then Open!" Harry stared at Sal in confusion before the sink he had been shouting at opened into a large tube.

"But I understood you..." Sal raised an eyebrow at Harry.

"As interesting as they might be to discuss I believe you have a fair maiden to rescue." Harry nodded in determination and conjuring a water tube jumped down the pipe.

"THIS WAS NOT A GOOD IDEA!" A mere four seconds later Harry shot out of the bottom of the pipe skidding across the ground until his tube was popped on a pointy rock. After that he bounced, skidded and rolled to a stop fifty feet away.

"I am so doing that again later!" Harry said he jumped up and continued running down the passage towards the inner chamber.

As he approached the outer wall of the Chamber Harry yelled, "Open" to his joy the wall began parting. By the time Harry reached the wall it had opened wide enough for him to slip through. On the other side he entered into the main chamber and found himself staring at the back of Ginny's head and the eyes of the basilisk.

"Ginny!" Ginny turned slowly to face him and Harry gasped loudly when he met her eyes. Instead of the normal brown compassionate eyes that he loved he was forced to look at two ugly glowing blood red slits.

"Ah Potter, how nice of you to join us." Harry almost puked. The voice coming from Ginny's mouth wasn't anywhere near the sweet melodic voice he could identify anywhere. This voice definitely belonged to a man and was raspy from misuse.

"I don't know who you are but I'm giving you five seconds to leave Ginny or I swear I will kill you."

"I'm afraid I can't do that Potter. You see she needs me. I'm the one she trusts. I'm the one she loves. Not you. You're nothing but mudblood filth. She told me all about you Potter. The forgotten boy who's parents hate him. How she was soul bonded to you, the useless one." Harry was shaking his head in horror.

"No... No! She didn't say that! She'd never say that!" The thing that was controlling Ginny let out a hoarse laugh.

"Of course she did. She never liked you. She pitied you! Everyday, Dear Tom, Harry came over again, why doesn't he realize I don't want to talk to him. Dear Tom, Harry sat next to me at lunch again I'm trying to distance myself but he won't take the hint." Harry began to stumble backwards, for some reason he was unable to not believe what Tom was saying.

Then it happened. For a second everything became clear and Harry could easily see that Tom was playing with him. At the same time the red glow disappeared from Ginny's eyes and was replaced by her normal brown.

"Don't... listen Harry... I love... yo- Ahhhhhh!" Ginny had been able to break the possession momentarily, but screamed in agony as Tom reasserted control and the red glow returned to her eyes. Those few precious seconds were all Harry needed though. Before the red glow had even fully returned Harry was sprinting across the chamber towards her.

"Fool!Avada Kedavra!" Harry paused for a second as Tom brought up Ginny's wand and tried to fire the deadly curse at him. Unfortunately for Tom, nothing happened. "Crucio!" Again nothing happened and Harry was almost across the Chamber. "Basilisk kill him!" Harry only had a moment to role out of the way as the basilisk shot across the remaining ten feet between them, it's jaws snapping shut where he had just been.

Harry ignored the snake and continued towards Ginny. Just as the snake lunged once again Harry dove forward. He tackled Ginny/Tom to the ground, as the basilisk once again missed him by inches. On the way to the ground Harry yanked the diary out of Ginny's hand, forcefully removing Tom's possession leaving Ginny unconscious.

The second Harry hit the ground he rolled and came up into a crouch. From this position he was able to see the basilisk turning around for a third strike. With aim he didn't know he had Harry threw the diary towards the basilisks open mouth. As it passed the snakes lips, the basilisk instinctually bit down on the offending invader.

As one tooth of the basilisk impaled the diary there was an agonizing scream. A second later the diary exploded, taking the head of the basilisk with it. Harry was knocked backwards from the shockwave and felt a sudden pain in his arm. As he recovered from being knocked backwards Harry glanced down at his arm.

Imbedded there, there was a bloody basilisk fang. Harry stared at the fang in shock for a second and then stumbled backwards as the incredible burning sensation began creeping through his blood. It felt like his entire body was on fire. The pain soon overtook his legs and he collapsed forward onto his knees. With a jerky movement he pulled the fang out of his arm leaving a jagged hole a few inches wide.

As his world began to turn black he thought he heard someone singing. He couldn't be sure for at that moment the poison overwhelmed him and he lost consciousness.

Break

Harry wasn't sure how long it was but instead of dying, he slowly began to wake up. His arm was still burning, but it was quickly fading. When he finally opened his eyes there was a bird with golden feathers and a visible golden aura, standing on his chest and leaning over the wound in his arm. Harry immediately recognized that the bird was a phoenix. He had no idea where it had come from though.

As Harry observed the bird the pain in his arm faded more and more with each passing second, until finally it stopped. The phoenix pulled back its head showing that the wound from the fang was gone leaving only perfect skin. Harry looked at the bird in appreciation.

"Thanks."

'It was my pleasure, bearer of my feather.' Harry's eyes widened in surprise as the voice echoed through his head.

"I wasn't aware phoenixes could do that."

'We rarely use the ability even with our bonded. Your mate is in trouble my mate has done all she can to sooth her. She need's you though.' Harry turned to find a bright red phoenix sitting on the ground next to Ginny's head trilling softly. Ginny was twisting and turning in her sleep, almost like she was having a violent nightmare.

"Ginny!" Harry scrambled across the ground until he was kneeling next to her. "Ginny wake up, it's only a dream." Ginny continued to thrash around, so Harry gently placed a hand on her shoulder. He was forced to move away when Ginny sat bolt upright screaming.

"No! Stay away from me Tom!" She curled up into a ball and began rocking back and forth on the spot. Her eyes were wide and unfocused and she was mumbling quietly to herself. Harry realized this must be an after affect caused by the sudden severing of Tom's possession. Ginny still thought she was being controlled and was trapped in her mind.

"Ginny," Harry began softly. "It's okay Tom's gone, I killed him." Ginny flinched away from his voice.

"Your not Harry. Your just some illusion Tom sent to torment me. Harry hates me." Harry slowly slid closer to her.

"I'm not an illusion Gin. You're my best friend, my soul mate I could never hate you." Silent tears began streaming down Ginny's cheeks and Harry noticed her eyes were starting to focus on things around her.

"Yes you do. I broke my promise, I kept writing to Tom. You hate me."

"I don't care about that Gin. I think he did something to you to make you want to write to him. I made a promise to you once that I would be your best friend forever. You know me, when I make a promise..." Ginny turned to look at Harry her eyes focusing on him for the first time.

"You keep it." Harry smiled at her, and she dove across the remaining two feet between them throwing her arms around his neck.

"Harry! I'm so sorry." Harry held her tightly to him letting her cry on his shoulder.

"Shh, Ginny it'll be fine, there's nothing to be sorry for." Harry held her close whispering soothing words to her as she cried. The two phoenixes stood by, trilling together softly helping to soothe Ginny. Finally she calmed down, though she didn't make any indication she was going to move away from Harry.

"Who are you?" The golden phoenix looked calmly at Harry who had spoken. Ginny turned, though still remaining in Harry's lap, and gazed at the phoenixes for the first time.

'I am Razzak, and this is my mate Lisna. We are your guides.'

"Our guides?" Ginny asked.

'Yes, we have already provided the feathers for your wands. Now we will provide you aid when you need us.'

"Does that mean you're going to bond with us?"

'In a sense.' With that both phoenixes began glowing brightly. Harry and Ginny were forced to shield their eyes as the glow became too powerful. After only a few seconds both felt like something warm was being pressed against their chests. As the warmth spread, knowledge began flooding into their minds.

When the glow reached its peak it dispersed in a flash brighter than anything imaginable. Once the glow had faded Harry and Ginny were the only living beings left in the Chamber.

A/N

I hope you guys all like the battle in the chamber and the fluffy aftermath. I know this is earlier then i said, but i'm just that good. :P

Anyway first i'd like to give special credit to one of my reviewers Future Writer Extraordinaire was the only one to mention that Daniel was conceited enough to name his owl Daniel Jr. i really thought more of you would pick up on that. Oh well, on with the Q&A:



Padfoot553: Lily, mostly because she's there. Although James will receive his fair share

Comet Moon: Your guesses were nice, and you got one right and one close, look at the end of this A/N and you'll see which one you were close on.

Everyone: I will now address the Daniel/Ginny issue that pretty much everyone asked about in some way. Daniel being a spoiled brat will go after Ginny, it will cause a fight, and someones nose will be broken. That's all i can say.

Codyesh2: Well you know about his wandless magic, and now his parselmouth, the rest won't be showing up til 4th year. Although in the next chapter i have a founders training section which will let you see a preview of what's to come. I liked Luna too. Good news, if everything goes to plan you'll have the blow up chapter by friday night, no promises though. Harry you got one right, were close on another, and totally off with one. Ginny you got all three congrats. I'll dedicate the blow up chapter to you. I tried for some Harry/Sirius bonding, but it's difficult with him not being at Hogwarts. Sorry but he does go after Ginny, i think you'll like what happens though.

EVERYONE: Once again i noticed a few people ask this. James, lives at Hogwarts with his family, but is a full time auror and floo's to work. Also when a defense teacher dies/goes insane/turns into a werewolf/ is found to be an imposter/ is kidnapped by centaurs, he will take over the defense classes in their absence. Usually grading very unfairly so Daniel does well. Also if Voldemort had never happened, the whole family would have loved each other but it would still have most likely been Harry/Lily James/Daniel, thats why James is especially oblivious to whats happening to Harry, hope that clears things up.

Hiharrypotter: The last chapter was the longest without my A/N's by several hundred words. I thought the last chapter was very informative. Ron is not a major character. Think of him like Seamus from cannon. I could kill him at anytime and most of you probably wouldn't care. 2 chapters a day is pushing it, i just started school again, and now my job is training me to be a part time replacement manager while one of our managers goes out on sick leave for a few months so i'll most likely post much slower from now on. Not to

mention the fact i haven't seen my friends in a few days... I should probably call them...

Harry Foureyes: I thank you for bringing up Ron's reaction. I admit it was a bit much, but i view it as such: Ron has always been in his brothers shadows. Now he has simply gone from being in his brothers shadows to being in Daniels shadow. So while he has barely done anything noteworthy, Ginny comes to Hogwarts and in five minutes stepped out of the shadows and made her own. So being the jealous prat he is, he freaked out.

Future Writer Extraordinaire: I'm hoping you meant how she got the diary back from Harry. If you look at that part again when Harry goes to get changed, she takes it from his trunk, he just never noticed. Once again thank you for being the only one to notice Daniel Jr.

Chibirosegirl: (i hope i spelled that right) 1. Yes 2. No both the diary voldemort and the real voldemort. The letter thing is never going to happen again.

llovepotter25: This is for everyone i've been meaning to say this for a while: In cannon I view ron and hermione as those friends you make when at orientation to college. You run around gathering as many friends as possible so that you have some sort of safety net. Then as you settle in you distance yourself from them making real friends. Harry just never distanced himself from them and got stuck.

Merry-Moony-Squishy: 4th year, though they are always together and have some physical closeness in this chapter, i just can't imagine them being together any younger then Ginny being 13, sorry.

Weasel Debater: Soul Bond with Ginny

Poshini: Hufflepuff was too bland, Gryffindor and Slytherin too cliché, i've only read like three stories where he went to Ravenclaw. So it appealed to me.

Well thats everyone. Good news we hit 10000 hits! somehow chapter 5 has more hits than chapters 2,3,4, and 6. I'm not sure how that happened, maybe its just a popular chapter. Once again we have a pop culture reference and a dedication to the person who gets it, Halo fans probably already know what i'm talking about.

To anyone who wants a picture of one of their animagus forms! If you have never played it, go to google and search Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess, look at the images the dog like creature is one of Harry's forms. Just wanted to give everyone a visual for when i describe it in the next chapter.

I think that's it for now, hopefully an update thursday night Reviews are amazing lets go for the 100 mark between now and the next update! Next chapter: Chapter 7: Year 2 wrapup/ animagus forms

## Chapter 7: Year 2 Wrap-up/Animagus

Harry and Ginny were finally able to take their hands away from their eyes. When they did the phoenixes were gone, yet Harry and Ginny found themselves flooded with knowledge. Aura sensing was second nature to them, they knew that if someone lied to them they would be able to detect it, and they knew that when they became Animagus, they would be phoenixes.

There was something else though. In the back of both their minds there was a presence. When they used their miniscule knowledge of legilimency to 'touch' it they found a familiar soothing presence. As both of them poked and prodded the new presence a wave of emotions swept over them. Harry suddenly felt curiosity and a light amount of fear that wasn't his own, while Ginny felt adrenaline and love that wasn't coming from her.

"Harry do you feel that?"

"Yea it's weird. Almost like I'm feeling someone else's emotions."

"Yea..." Using occlumency Ginny carefully scanned her memories hoping to find some mention of this. Then it hit her like a speeding Knight Bus. "Harry the book!"

"What book, I told you I destroyed the dia-"

"No, not that one. The soul bond book, remember it said that if one saved the other at great risk to their own life the bond would become more powerful. Maybe this is just our bond becoming more powerful."

"Maybe..." Harry paused looking like he was waging an internal battle with himself. Finally he sighed and his eyes met Ginny's.

"Gin, there's something I haven't told you. You remember when you told me that thanks to your occlumency training you started remembering things from when you were really young."

"Yea... Why?"

"I did too, I remembered that night." Ginny gasped in shock.

"Are you sure?"

"Positive, this is going to sound unbelievable but Voldemort never attacked Daniel." Ginny's brow furrowed in confusion.

"What do you mean? If he didn't attack Daniel, then... Oh Merlin!" Ginny's eyes widened as she looked at Harry in awe.

"Voldemort never attacked Daniel, because he died trying to kill me. At least I think he did, I remember him casting the killing curse at me, then this golden bubble appearing around me and he started screaming in agony. Then the memory just goes black. I think I was knocked out. I'm not sure. Either way no one would believe me." Ginny grabbed his hand comfortingly and using her other hand brought his chin up until their eyes met.

"I believe you Harry." Harry's worried face broke out in a wide smile.

"That's all I need then." Harry leaned forward kissing Ginny lightly on the forehead. "Come on Gin, we should go before someone realizes we're missing."

The ride back up the pipe was not as fun as the one down.

Break

A week later and Harry was finally able to bring Ginny to meet the Founders for the first time. As they entered the room Ginny gasped loudly at the ornate armor and weaponry hanging around the walls. There was also an entire wall filled with books, some of which hadn't been seen for hundreds of years. The four Founders smiled kindly from their portraits as Ginny took in the amazing features of the room.

In the center of the room was a clearly marked off dueling area, while in a corner by the bookcases was a comfortable sitting area. On the wall next to the entrance was a large map of Hogwarts, it showed the location of everyone currently in the castle. Along the only remaining wall were racks of medieval swords, bows, armor, spears, pole arms, axes, and maces.

"Hello Ginny, I am Rowena Ravenclaw. I am so proud to have a Weasley female in my house." A red haired man with red and gold clothes snorted loudly from his painting.

"She should have been in my house, as all Weasley's have been." Rowena clucked her tongue at him.

"Godric that's not true. All male Weasley's have been in your house. The females have always had more sense and gone to mine or Helga's houses." Both women smiled kindly down at Ginny who blushed under their scrutiny.

"Do not mind those two they always bicker. Helga and I believe it is their way of flirting." Ginny looked to the portrait of Salazar Slytherin who was once again looking as regal as possible. His black hair was pulled back into a perfect ponytail, his green and silver dress robes perfectly flat without so much as a wrinkle, and his face calm and emotionless.

"Shut up Sal!" Rowena and Godric yelled at the same time. As the three Founders began arguing loudly amongst themselves, Harry moved closer to Ginny so he could whisper in her ear.

"They do this from time, I usually read or practice with the swords. Sal's been teaching me some basic fencing moves, want me to show you?" Ginny looked at him eagerly nodding her head. Harry summoned two swords and handed one to Ginny. "Ok lets see how good you are. I'm going to try and hit you, do your best to block me. Don't worry, these swords are blunt so we probably won't cut each other if we accidentally hit one another." Ginny gripped the sword awkwardly and held it in front of her. "Hang on your grip is a little off let me show you."

Harry moved around so that Ginny could see the grip he had on his sword. She readjusted her hands accordingly and found the sword much more comfortable to hold and maneuver. A few minutes later the room was silent except for the clashing of metal as Harry and Ginny sparred with one another. Occasionally Sal or Godric would call out advice, but mostly observed their young pupils.

Break

Near the end of December Harry and Ginny finally began preparing the Animagus potion. It took thirty days to brew and would be finished around the end of January. In the meantime, the Potters, and all the Weasley's would be staying at Hogwarts for the holiday break.

## Break

Albus Dumbledore was widely regarded as the most powerful wizard alive. He was intelligent and resourceful. He was able to use his advanced knowledge of magic to duel at a mastery few in history had ever achieved. However, Dumbledore was faced with a problem he wasn't entirely sure he could handle.

## Harry Potter.

The brother to the boy-who-lived was turning out to be a mystery. Dumbledore was worried that Harry might become the next Dark Lord. So far this year many odd occurrences had happened around young Harry.

In September the portal to Platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$  had mysteriously shut itself just seconds after Harry had gone through, locking Daniel, Lily, and James out in the process. Then even more baffling was the anti-apparition charm that had appeared around the entire station. That was only one of the confusing events surrounding Harry.

Throughout the year Harry had been disappearing somewhere and Dumbledore couldn't seem to locate him with any of the school's tracking equipment. Which begged the question: Where was Harry going?

Then there was the fact that Harry appeared to be a natural occlumens. Dumbledore had tried several times during meals and while silently observing classes, to perform subtle legilimency on Harry. So far every attempt had been rebuffed.

On top of all this was the recent attack on Daniel Potter. At the Gryffindor-Slytherin Quidditch match, a bludger had blatantly attacked Daniel, and successfully broken his arm. Dumbledore had noticed Harry's absence from the match. Even though Ravenclaw hadn't been playing, he'd expected Harry to be watching his own brothers Quidditch match.

Finally there was the mysterious attack on the chickens earlier in the year. The culprit had never been found, and Dumbledore had found no clues as to who it could be. The only person who had displayed the ability to slip in and out of a place leaving no trace of their ever being there was Harry.

All of this had allowed Dumbledore to come to the conclusion that Harry Potter must be watched. If he proved to be dark, he would be dealt with. As Tom should have been dealt with all those years ago.

Break

January 28th dawned as a good day for Harry and Ginny, the Animagus potion was finally complete. Both could hardly contain their excitement as they quickly ate breakfast and then rushed off to the Founders room. Luckily enough it was Saturday.

The potion was a sky blue and bubbling frothily when they arrived. Harry carefully measured out two vials full. After a second of nervous anticipation they toasted each other and swallowed the liquid. Two seconds later and they both fell backwards unconscious.

Break

Harry was standing on the shore of a river. Above him mountains reached skyward, until finally disappearing in the low hanging clouds. Around him a large untamed forest loomed, shrouded in darkness by the rain clouds overhead. Not sure what else to do Harry began wandering into the forest.

He had just wandered in a small field when he caught his first sight of movement. A squirrel was sitting on a stump busily chewing an acorn. Harry approached the creature cautiously wondering if this was his Animagus form, and deeply hoping it wasn't. Harry got to within a few feet of the small creature when another movement caught his eyes. A brown/white blur swooped down out of the sky grabbing the unsuspecting squirrel from where it had been sitting. It happened so fast Harry thought for a second he had imagined it. Then he heard a loud cry.

"Kreee-ar," Harry spun to his left. Sitting on a midlevel branch was a brown hawk about two feet tall, with long red feathers protruding



from its tail. In one talon was the now lifeless body of the squirrel. Its large brown/black eyes were fixed on Harry.

"Hello," Harry was positive that this was his Animagus form. He'd always imagined having a bird of some sort, now he knew. This hawk was swift and deadly, it obviously had precision accuracy and amazing eye sight. Now Harry was a little unsure of what to do.

"You're really amazing. That dive was brilliant." The hawk appeared to appreciate Harry's compliments and preened itself puffing out its chest a little. "I'm not sure how this works but I would love it if you were my Animagus form." The hawk gazed piercingly at Harry, as if judging him.

With another cry it dove straight towards him. Harry guessed this was part of the process and stood perfectly still. The hawk got to within mere centimeters of his chest before there was a bright flash of light and the hawk disappeared. Harry had the briefest of seconds to wonder what had happened before he fell unconscious once again.

Break

Ginny appeared in a large open plain. There was nothing but grass and flat land for miles in every direction, but in the distance was the faint outline of a long mountain range. Unlike Harry, Ginny was immediately aware of wildlife around her.

A rabbit hopped along the ground from one large clump of grass to the next. In the sky a few different varieties of birds circled and dove playfully. Some would occasionally come down and land in one of the small bushes or rock clusters scattered across the plain. Unsure of what to do Ginny walked to a nearby rock cluster and sat down on it looking up at the birds.

As she watched Ginny saw one bird flying higher than all the others turn in a wide arc and then dive downwards like a bullet. The smaller low flying birds noticed the other bird only a few seconds before it reached them. They immediately began desperately trying to get out of the way. The diving bird adjusted its course slightly and snatched one of the smaller birds out of the air, leaving only a few dislodged feathers to float slowly to the ground.

The bird then turned and swept downwards towards the rock Ginny was on. It landed on the opposite side of the rock and Ginny was finally able to see that it was some sort of falcon. The other bird was clutched tightly in one of its talons not moving.

The falcon was a brown/white mix with a yellow beak, and a thin yellow line around black pupils. It felt like the bird was piercing through all her protections with its gaze. Ginny returned the gaze refusing to show any weakness. The bird seemed to approve of this.

It took off flying straight towards her. Ginny didn't budge, prepared for the bird to hit her. It never reached her, for just like it happened with Harry, the bird disappeared in a flash and Ginny lost consciousness.

Break

Harry found himself standing once again on the bank of a river. This time however it was later, around dusk with the sun just disappearing behind the peaks of the mountains. This time however, he decided to wait where he was and sat on a boulder that dipped into the edge of the river.

He didn't have to wait long. A snapping twig was the only noise that signaled his next forms arrival. Harry casually turned to watch a hulking black wolf move soundlessly from the tree line. Its shoulders were wide and packed with muscle. Its fur was black, ending in a shaggy tail. Its eyes were the same emerald green as his, and on the top of its head between its ears was a white patch of fur in the shape of a lightening bolt.

The wolf seemed to only judge Harry for a second before taking an immediate liking to him. It walked up to him, forcing its head into his hand. Harry playfully scratched him behind the ears and down his back. The wolf finally pulled away from Harry after a few seconds and backed away a few feet.

Without warning the wolf pounced at Harry. Once again there was a flash and then Harry blacked out again.

Break

This time around Ginny found herself in a lush forest growing on the side of a mountain. There were large outcroppings of rock every few hundred meters and the ground was obviously inclining upwards. It appeared as if the forest was just transitioning from winter to spring. Fresh leaves were growing from the branches while small ice packs were still evident scattered around the landscape.

Ginny leaned casually against a tree waiting for her next form to show itself. It didn't take long. A large tiger, mostly white but with orange fur beginning to grow in soon came into view climbing down the mountain. The tiger stopped several yards from Ginny and eyed her carefully. Ginny didn't move a muscle except to smile cheerfully at the tiger.

In Ginny's mind she was beautiful. Her fur was lush and full. Muscles rippled and flexed with each movement, yet the tiger still moved with a feline grace, confident in every movement. Ginny wanted nothing more than to pet the large cat.

The tiger seemed to sense this and moved closer rubbing its head against the outside of Ginny's leg. Ginny, taking this as a good sign, reached down and brushed its fur lovingly. She noticed a distinct pattern of brown spots across the fur on the tigers face and grimaced when she realized they were her freckles.

Finally the large cat purred in pleasure, then moved away. It only walked a few feet before turning and pouncing on Ginny. Once again, flash, unconscious.

Break

Harry and Ginny awoke together on a large rock. They blinked and looked around in curiosity. They seemed to be in a muggle park. The large rock they were on had a small playground placed at the bottom of it and large trees around. Paved paths weaved in and out of the distance. Ginny and Harry had a unique view from where they were on the giant rock.

Looking down they saw a lush park that looked like it would be incredibly fun to explore. However looking up they were able to see soaring skyscrapers rising above the tops of the trees. Neither Harry nor Ginny had ever heard of a place like this. They were in a massive park, but easily visible around the park was an even more

massive city. Their confusion only increased when Razzak and Lisna flamed into existence before them.

'Greetings bearer's of our feathers.' Razzak's now familiar voice echoed in both their heads.

"Hello again Razzak. Where are we?"

'Central Park, in New York City. Razzak and I loved it here. It is the perfect blending of Human industrialism and natures beauty. It brings about a sense of peace and quiet in an otherwise unending symphony of people talking, motors running, sirens blaring, cars honking, and ground shaking subway trains.' Harry and Ginny both had to appreciate the truth of Lisna's words. They had been to London, and knew that New York City was supposed to be much worse.

"So are you here to bond yourselves to us like our other forms did?" Ginny asked.

'We have already bonded ourselves to you. We came to simply explain that we no longer exist in the physical world, only in your minds. Our wands went to the two of you for a reason. When the time is right you shall be brought here again to speak with us, and we shall explain everything. For now put it out of your minds and live your lives to their fullest.' Harry and Ginny looked at Razzak in a mix of curiosity and confusion.

"What do you mean the wands went to us for a reason? What won't you tell us?"

'I'm sorry Harry. We shall meet again, goodbye.' Harry and Ginny felt a sudden tug behind their navels and had the sensation of being pulled backwards. The world around them began to turn dark.

Break

Both of them sat bolt upright breathing heavily. They were back in the Founders room. Rowena looked down worriedly at them.

"Are you two alright you've been out for nearly four hours." Both looked at her in shock.

"Four hours? I thought you said it usually only took one hour." Rowena nodded, and sank into thought while Godric spoke up.

"So what are your forms?" Harry deferred to Ginny allowing her to go first.

"I'm some sort of falcon, a tiger, Siberian I think, it had a white coat, and a phoenix." All four Founders were shocked that Ginny had three forms. As one they turned to look at Harry.

"I'm a hawk, I'm not sure which kind, a wolf, not sure what type, it was big though, and I'm also a phoenix." The Founders were now taking turns looking from Harry to Ginny then back to Harry in utter shock.

"Well that is interesting... besides that I think you two should go make an appearance at lunch before someone notices you're missing. Also look in the library to see if you can positively identify your forms. Once you do that we can begin the transformation." Harry and Ginny nodded to Helga and rushed off to eat and then begin the research.

Break

By the time June rolled around Harry and Ginny had made good progress in their transformations. Both were going for their bird forms first. Harry was a Red-Tailed Hawk, while Ginny was a Peregrine Falcon. Both were so sufficiently ahead in their classes that they spent almost all their free time in the Founders room, requiring little to no time to complete their homework.

They'd both begun advancing in their use of swords and other weapons under the tutelage of Snape and Godric. Their spell knowledge was increasing daily thanks to Rowena and Helga. Next year they even hoped to gain a mastery level of control over fiendfyre. It was the most advanced fire spell ever invented, and they believed that a control over fire would make their phoenix transformations easier.

They were both so wrapped up in their extracurricular activities they almost missed the excitement circulating around Daniel. He, Hermione, and Ron had stumbled upon Lockhart, having

relationships with a few of his older students and then using memory charms to make them forget. Lockhart was able to disarm Ron.

The only problem was that Ron had tripped earlier in the year breaking his wand nearly in two, since then it hadn't quite worked. When Lockhart tried to erase their memories the spell backfired. From that day on he could only remember things on a ten second basis. He was admitted permanently to St. Mungo's where he spends his days introducing himself over and over again to pictures of himself.

Dumbledore of course awarded the Trio a mountain of points placing Gryffindor ahead in the house cup and allowing them to easily win it. They were however unable to win the Quidditch cup because Cedric Diggory once again easily beat Daniel to the Snitch.

So it was with only a slight amount of sadness that Harry and Ginny left the Founders room for the last time and headed for the train home.

A/N

First off to AnnF: I went back and looked over the story guidelines, the only rules pertaining to A/N's were that there cant be chapters that are only A/Ns with no story and that they should appear at the beginning or end of each chapter, if they do appear. However, i will be attempting to make this shorter and answer as many questions in as little words as possible.

Secondly to Sanyal: I realize they sound way too mature for 7yearolds it was done on purpose. Also i dont know if you realize it but there are many different versions of english. I speak Long Island(pronounced Lon-guy-land) english. If i tried i'm sure i could make up some stereotypical british accent, proving i'm some arrogant ego centric american. I'll admit that my story doesn't sound british, thats because im not british and im not going to disrespect british people by trying to be. If you dont like it dont read it.

Dreadnok: my second negative review, sorry i'm just not a ron/hermione fan, i wouldn't say hate, i would say have no interest whatsoever in. It probably wont happen in this story, and they are not going to be Harry's friends in this story, ever. Your review was at

least entirely legitimate and constructive, thanks for having an interest? in my story. I hope you keep reading.

To all the people who asked, they kept the chamber incident to themselves. Also there were two phoenixes in the chamber, Razzak and Lisna, they gave the feathers that were used in Harry and Ginny's wands which are different wands from cannon. I don't see the point in priori incant-whatever if his parents are alive and he can kick a\$\$.

Another note: The Chamber happened on Halloween in my story, this meant that the possession wasn't as strong and Tom was just going to open the chamber for the first time. So there was no reason for him to be standing next to Ginny in his normal form, he was still too weak to do that. I think Hiharrypotter asked about that.

Padfoot553: I already have a draft of my epilogue, and it doesn't look good for Daniels love life, too arrogant.

Weasel Debater: He umm... tripped and fell in his rush to get back.

Next chapter is most likely going to be Friday, I really want to work on the next chapter which is Codyesh2's dream chapter. My e-mail is open for anyone who has pressing questions, if I start getting all sorts of junk mail and stuff though, I'll stop checking it, I still have my school e-mail which everyone else I know uses. Thanks to my reviewers and hurray for 100 reviews!

## Chapter 8: The Fight Part1

### Ministry Employee Murdered in own Home!

Tragedy struck last night in Liverpool, as Ministry official Bartemius Crouch Sr. was brutally murdered in his home. Mr. Crouch was found this morning when his personal assistant went to his house after he failed to show up for work.

Upon arriving at the house, Samantha Weatherby found the front door destroyed and the Dark Mark floating ominously above the house. Aurors and Hit Wizards were immediately called to the scene. After the scene was declared safe, it was discovered that Mr. Crouch had secretly been hiding his son, Bartemius Crouch Jr.

Readers might remember that Mr. Crouch Jr. was sentenced to life in Azkaban, after being found guilty of attacking the Longbottom family, resulting in the permanent hospitalization of Alice and Frank Longbottom. Crouch Jr. was believed to have died in Azkaban several years ago.

New evidence found last night at the Crouch residence, has proven that Mr. Crouch Sr. and his late wife, Jennifer, aided their son in escaping Azkaban. Using polyjuice potion, they were able to switch Mrs. Crouch and Mr. Crouch Jr. It is believed that Mrs. Crouch died a short while later while still impersonating her son.

It is unknown as to how Mr. Crouch Jr. was able to procure a wand, but during questioning the family House elf, confirmed that Mr. Crouch Jr. killed his father, cast the dark mark over the house, and disappeared.

The Ministry urges all Wizards and Witches to stay away from Mr. Crouch Jr. if they see him, and contact the Ministry immediately. TheProphet will stay with this story and bring you more updates as they occur.

Break

The murder of Bartemius Crouch sparked a massive panic across wizarding Britain. Under advice from Dumbledore, the Potter family spent most of the summer at Hogwarts. Harry suffered the most from this, missing Ginny like a piece of himself. What made it even



worse was that he couldn't go to the Founders room. Everywhere he went it seemed like Dumbledore was following him around. If it weren't for the aura sensing he had gained in the Chamber he might have never seen Dumbledore following him.

As it was, Harry's only communication with Ginny, until August, was letters. Then the miracle happened.

Break

Harry was in his bed in the soon to be third year Ravenclaw dorms. It was nearing eleven pm and he had just finished writing his newest letter to Ginny. He lay back in his bed staring longingly at the picture of them she had given him for Christmas so long ago. He of course had many more pictures of the two of them by now, but that first picture would always be his favorite.

That's when he heard it.

'Harry...' It sounded like someone had sighed longingly after saying his name. He immediately sat up in bed looking around for the source. There was no one in his room, or Ravenclaw tower for that matter. He was alone.

'I want to see you so badly...' There it was again. That voice, it was so familiar, but it couldn't be.

"Ginny?" As he had expected no one answered. After several seconds of silence he laid back down convinced he had just been hearing things.

'Stupid Daniel, why can't they hide somewhere I can visit!' Harry sat up in bed again. He knew he'd heard something, but there was something off about it. It was almost like his ears hadn't registered the noise, just his brain. Confused he reviewed the memories again using occlumency.

As he'd suspected he hadn't actually heard anything, it was all in his head. That thought triggered another memory. Chapter four of the soul bond book suddenly appeared vividly in his mind. The words telepathic communication in particular catching his attention. Curious Harry closed his eyes and concentrated on the area of his brain he'd figured out was his connection to Ginny.

'Ginny? It's Harry, can you hear me?' Harry waited for several minutes wondering if it had worked. Finally just as he was giving up hope, Ginny's voice floated through his mind.

'Harry? Is this really you?'

'Yes! This is so amazing! I think it's part of our bond.'

'I don't care what it is Harry, it lets me talk to you even when we're apart. That's all that matters to me.'

'I know! This is so much better than letters. I'd still rather be able to have you here in person.'

'I know Harry. It's been so hard here Ron keeps talking about Daniel, especially whenever I'm around. I think he's trying to brag about all the things they do.'

'I know what you mean. Daniel seems to finally want to talk to me. All he does though is ask questions about you. Says he wants to get to know his best mate's little sister better.'

'Why would he want to get to know me?'

'I don't know maybe it's the only thing he can think of to talk about. I am the only one his age around and he doesn't have anything to play with. Although he has been disappearing for a few hours everyday. I think dad or Dumbledore are giving him private lessons.'

'That wouldn't surprise me. Those two always play favorites when it comes to Daniel.'

'Yea I know. Hey Gin, I think using this thing is draining me, I feel exhausted all of a sudden.'

'Yea me too, maybe we need to... before we can... I can't stay... Goodnight Harry.' Ginny's message began to falter and Harry missed parts of it. He realized that the exhaustion must be interfering with their ability to speak. Summoning all his remaining energy he concentrated as hard as he could on the bond.

'Goodnight Ginny.' As he finished sending the last message the world quickly faded to black and Harry passed out.

Break

By the time September 1st arrived Harry was waiting on the steps of the school. The carriages started arriving and Harry began pushing his way through the crowd in the direction he knew Ginny would be in. Finally just before Ginny came into sight a wave of shock and confusion pushed its way through the bond. The crowd seemed to part in front of Harry allowing him a view of the strangest sight he'd ever seen.

Ginny was standing next to Luna and Neville, she was awkwardly trying to return a hug Daniel was giving her. Next to her Luna was as always smiling dreamily, while Neville looked on in a mix of disgust and anger. Behind Ginny, Ron and Hermione were smiling broadly as they climbed out of one of the carriages. People around them were looking on curiously. Ginny for her part was looking over Daniel's shoulder at Harry.

'Help?' This seemed to snap Harry out of his daze and he strode forward purposefully.

"Excuse me Daniel," Daniel stepped back, but that was all Ginny needed. She pushed past Daniel and leapt into Harry's waiting arms.

"I missed you so much." Harry chuckled lightly into her hair, lavishing in the smell of flowers and cinnamon.

"You at least at had Luna, I was stuck here by myself." Harry pulled back from Ginny. A glance over her shoulder revealed Daniel looking on with a mix of anger and jealousy and Ron red faced and ready to punch Harry.

'You have any idea what all that is about?'

'None whatsoever.'

Harry and Ginny managed to disappear into the crowd before Ron caused a scene, and hand in hand made their way to the Ravenclaw table. A few seconds after they sat down Luna gracefully took the seat across from them.

"You two should consider yourselves lucky. There's a swarm of snicklefeathered thachtakers around you two." Harry and Ginny smiled curiously at their friend before Ginny asked the obvious question.

"Luna, what's a snicklefeathered thachtaker?"

"They're small serpent creatures that stretch between two people suffering from true love." Ginny and Harry shared a shocked look, while Luna returned to her food.

Break

"I know you two are lying!"

Harry wasn't sure what his twin brother was talking about. He was however, very angry that he had been pulled into a secret passage and slammed against a wall.

"Excuse me?" Daniel narrowed his eyes as his brother pushed him off.

"I said I know you and Ginny are lying about that soul bond stuff." Harry stepped back in surprise. Then his eyes narrowed and he stepped up right into Daniel's face again.

"Who told you?" Harry's voice was cold and the power started to radiate off him, making Daniel step back in a mix of fear and shock. Then stupidly he answered.

"D-Dad told me. He said I shouldn't try to get Ginny to go out with me. I know you two are lying though. Everyone knows Ginny had a crush on me first!" Harry began shaking his head and laughed harshly at Daniel.

"I can't believe you're doing all this because you're jealous that Ginny and I love each other!" Daniel's cocky smile faltered for a second before returning.

"I'll win her over. What's a loser like you have to offer her anyway." Harry didn't even bother answering, he knew something Daniel

didn't. Without warning the tapestry Daniel had pulled Harry behind was ripped open.

Daniel had a second to meet the blazing brown eyes of Ginny before her fist collided with his jaw. The impact sent him stumbling backwards into the wall. That didn't stop Ginny however, without pausing she stepped forward until she was standing directly over him.

"How dare you? I never thought you could get anymore arrogant or stupid, but obviously you have. You're worse than Malfoy." Daniel had recovered by now and was on his feet. At being compared to Malfoy he made a noise that was a mix between a snarl and a cough. He had a trickle of blood running down his chin.

"How dare you hit me? I'm the Boy-Who-Lived!" Ginny gave him a disgusted look.

"So? You're still a self centered arrogant prat!" This actually made Daniel smile.

"My mum used to say that to my dad. It just proves that you like me." Ginny narrowed her eyes and took a step forward towards Daniel.

"I will never go out with you Daniel Potter! I hate you!" Ginny moved to punch him again but this time he was ready. One of his hands grabbed her wrist while the other came up like he was going to slap her. Harry was a step quicker and just before Daniel's hand connected with Ginny, Harry grabbed his wrist.

"Don't you dare touch her." His voice was cold and barely above a whisper. Daniel tried to pull his wrist free but failed. The muscles Harry had developed over the past few months of sword fight, and regular work outs which Sal and Godric had forced him into, were noticeably paying off.

"Let me go now or I'm going to tell mum and the headmaster you two were fighting!"

"You'll have to get in line I need to talk to them myself first." Harry's fist came up and caught Daniel right below the chin. Daniel fell backwards into the wall, before he could recover though Harry knocked him out with a stunner.

"Harry, are you sure that was a good idea?" Ginny smirked at her.

"I don't know, but it sure as hell felt good." Ginny rolled her eyes at him, but failed to hide her smile.

"I have to go have a conversation with my dear father. You should probably go back to the dorms." Ginny raised her eyebrow at him.

"You know as well as I do that I'm not going to let you do this alone. So we should probably go find your dad." Harry sighed, but Ginny grabbed his hand and started pulling him down the hall towards his parents quarters, leaving Daniel unconscious in the secret passage.

Break

"How could you!" Harry had just pushed through the door to his parents rooms. He'd walked right up to his father and started yelling in his face.

"What are you talking about?"

"You told Daniel about the bond! You promised you wouldn't tell him!" James blinked in surprise.

"How do you know?"

"Daniel just tried to attack me telling me he didn't believe us about the bond. He's convinced he can steal Ginny from me. The spoiled bastard actually tried to hit her."

"Watch your language young man, I will not allow you to talk about your brother like that!" Ginny by this point was standing a few feet behind Harry glaring at James.

"I don't care what you say! He isn't my brother, he's an arrogant self centered asshole!" This seemed to anger James even more.

"You should be grateful to have Daniel as your brother! He's the boy-who-lived!"

Lily was watching the argument in a mix of horror and shock. Over the last few months she had noticed that her son was both an

intelligent person, and an outstanding individual. He was kind and compassionate always willing to help others. He'd also shown that he was amazingly intelligent and was almost as good with Runes as she was. Unfortunately she couldn't say the same for Daniel. He had also taken Ancient Runes, though on the first test he hadn't even made an attempt and then acted surprised that he had failed, horribly. She had started wondering if the rumors that James had played favorites were true.

"GRATEFUL! Why on earth would I be grateful to have that egotistic, self centered, arrogant prick as my brother? I'm not grateful! I'm ashamed! I avoid spending anytime with you because you're all embarrassing!"

"Why should we be proud of you? You've done absolutely nothing! There's nothing special about you! Daniel saved you from a life of fear and what did you ever do? You've done nothing but bask in the glory coming off of him! You're no son of mine!"

Harry took a step back. Through everything that had ever happened he'd always hoped that his parents loved him. Hearing this was like a punch in the stomach. The air rushed out of him as he took first one step, then stumbled backwards. Ginny was there to steady him though. Harry stared in horror at his father for a second then turned and before anyone could say a thing ran out of the room.

James stared smugly at where his son had been, not saying a word. Ginny glared at him walked forward until she was right in his face. Without a second thought she slapped him as hard as she could across the face. The hit left a red handprint across his cheek. After that Ginny turned and walked to the door. In the doorway she stopped and glanced back over her shoulder.

"I never thought I'd agree with Professor Snape on something. But, he was right about you Mr. Potter." Without another word Ginny rushed after Harry, leaving Lily and James alone.

"Lily I demand you take points from Ginny! She attacked me!" Lily looked at her husband with as much pity as she could personally muster.

"No James. If she hadn't done it already, I would've slapped you. I'm going to find my son, maybe you should think about what you said." Lily left James standing dumbstruck in their room.

Break

Lily found Harry and Ginny in an empty classroom. The only reason they hadn't gone straight to the Founders room was because they suspected someone would want to talk to them once Daniel was found and revived. Lily wasn't too shocked to find Harry sobbing onto Ginny's shoulder as she held him lovingly.

When she walked into the room Harry and Ginny both looked towards her. Harry refused to meet her eyes and his hand noticeably clutched Ginny's. Ginny unlike Harry, met Lily's eyes and glared at the woman. Lily was reminded of a mother tiger protecting her cubs. She took a step towards them but stopped when Ginny took a step forward placing Harry slightly behind her.

"What do you want?" Ginny's voice was blunt and laced with fury. Lily winced almost like she'd been hit.

"I wanted to check on Harry. James said horrible things and I wanted to make sure he was alright." For some reason this seemed to infuriate Ginny more and her face began to turn red from suppressed rage.

"Why would you care! You've never cared before! Give me one reason why I should let you talk to Harry!" Lily opened her mouth preparing to argue with Ginny, then she paused. Thoughts of the past twelve years began replaying in her head.

Christmases where she couldn't remember Harry opening his presents. The weeks before where she couldn't remember buying presents for Harry. Trips to Diagon Alley where she was so busy taking care of all of Daniel's needs she never noticed that Harry had once again snuck off. Entirely missing the growing relationship between her oldest son and Ginny. After a few silent minutes Lily lowered her head and spoke in barely a whisper.

"You're right." Harry and Ginny looked at her slightly in shock before she continued. "I was a horrible mother. Harry was right to be ashamed of us. If I were you I wouldn't want me talking to him either.



But please, let me prove that I want to change. Let me talk to my son and beg him for his forgiveness." Ginny narrowed her eyes looking the woman up and down. She glanced backwards at Harry who's eyes were filled with renewed hope.

"Fine you can talk to him, but, I swear to whatever god there is, if you hurt him I will make your life a living hell." Lily nodded and Ginny moved to the side allowing her access to Harry. She didn't leave the room and instead stood off to the side of the room watching them carefully.

"Harry, I'm sorry. I wasn't there for you like I should have been. I was so caught up in the attention and fame that everyone was giving Daniel I let myself perform an unforgivable crime. I forgot my oldest son, I don't know if you can ever forgive me, but I'm willing to try and make up for what I did." Harry stared in shock for a second, as his mother walked up and knelt in front of him placing both hands on his shoulders.

"Mum," Tears still in his eyes Harry stepped forward placing his arms around her finally getting the one thing he'd wanted more than anything all this time. His mother returned the hug with as much love as she could.

Ginny on the other side of the room smiled happily and quietly left the room closing the door behind her and taking up guard outside of it. Inside of the room Harry held onto his mother for dear life, his mother for her part was trying to do everything she could to comfort her son.

"Harry, your father is a complete moron. He was angry though and he didn't mean any of it. He'll come around eventually." Harry's eyes became hard and he took a step away from his mother.

"No! He doesn't care! He'll never take back his words, he'll be too stubborn. I know you've tried before mum, but he's never done anything! He's always spoiled Daniel and paid no attention to me whatsoever. Sirius is more my father than he ever will be!" Lily looked down in a mix of shame and horror at the amount of truth in his statements.

"Harry please I don-" Lily was interrupted as the door was thrown open. Professors Snape and Flitwick walked in with Ginny following closely behind trying to stop them.

"Excuse us Lily, the Headmaster requires Mr. Potter's presence. He apparently assaulted his brother." Snape said in an amazingly normal voice devoid of its normal malice and hatred. Harry sighed, he'd been expecting this, and it would be his mother's first real test of her willingness to change.

"Ok professor you'll have to lead the way I don't know where his office is." Snape nodded and took the lead, behind him Harry and Ginny walked hand in hand followed closely by a tearful and worried Lily and at the rear a confused Flitwick.

A/N

Sorry for the long wait( at least for me) i had a pretty hectic weekend and i couldn't get the argument and reconciliation to sound right. I still don't like the way the argument between James and Harry but i couldn't figure out how to make it sound more natural. I think some of you might have wanted him to argue more with Lily, but the way i characterize him in my head and the way i tried to make Harry out in the story didn't call for it.

Thanks to all my reviewers and especially to all like twenty of you who pointed out the Snape-Sal mixup in the last chapter. The next chapter will be out soonish hopefully by tuesday night.

Next Chapter: The Fight Part 2

## Chapter 9: The Fight Part 2

Waiting for them in Dumbledore's office were Dumbledore, James, Professor McGonagall, and Madame Pomfrey who was fussing over a bruised Daniel. Harry smirked knowingly at the red handprint currently adorning James' cheek. Daniel and James were both glaring angrily at Harry. Behind his desk, Dumbledore looked at Harry in a mix of disappointment and guilt.

"Mr. Potter, Ms. Weasley, I assume you know why I asked you here." Harry smirked and couldn't resist the urge to take a jab at Dumbledore.

"You know what they say Headmaster, assuming makes an ass out of you and me." He was rewarded with a laugh disguised as a cough from Ginny and several shocked looks from the gathered Professors. Dumbledore had the strangest reaction though, after a slip in his normal calm facade, he schooled his features into a warm smile.

"So it does Mr. Potter, so it does. I've received reports that you attacked your brother without provocation and Ms. Weasley also attacked your father a short while later." Before either child could defend themselves, Lily stepped forward.

"Headmaster, I'm still not sure exactly what happened between my sons, but Ginny did nothing wrong. James got exactly what he deserved. I would have done it myself if she didn't beat me to it." James looked at his wife in shock as she stared challengingly at him. For once he chose the wise decision and remained quiet.

"Be that as it may Mrs. Potter, I will not tolerate any of my students attacking guests of the school. Twenty points from Ravenclaw, Ms. Weasley." Ginny chose not to protest, knowing there was nothing she could say to change his mind. "Now then Mr. Potter, is there anything you would like to say in your defense?" Harry met the Headmaster's eyes and felt a subtle poke of legilimency. He brushed it away quickly and strengthened his mental shields.

Harry knew many ways to share his side of the story, the easiest of which would be a Pensieve memory. That, however, would reveal the fact that he and Ginny shared a soul bond. Agreeing to take Veritaserum would allow Dumbledore to ask any questions he wanted, and Harry had too many secrets to protect. Allowing

Dumbledore to use legilimency on him was totally out of the question. He decided to buy himself a few extra seconds.

"I'd like to hear Daniel's version of events myself sir." Dumbledore nodded slowly and the entire room turned to look at Daniel. At once he became as sweet and innocent as he could.

"Well, I was walking back to the common room from lunch. Then Harry grabbed me and dragged me behind a tapestry into a secret passage. He started threatening me for trying to be friends with Ginny. I just wanted to get to know my best mates little sister better is all. He got really mad, but then before he could say anything else Ginny pulled open the tapestry. She said she'd heard me and she wouldn't hang out with me, I'm too much of a glory seeking Gryffindor blood traitor. Then she punched me."

He paused here for dramatic effect. Harry and Ginny were staring at him in total shock. Dumbledore, McGonagall, James, and Flitwick however were looking on with compassion. Snape looked like he wanted to be anywhere else other than that office. Lily surprised Harry the most, he'd expected her to be going along the same route as James. Instead she was looking at Daniel in a mix of shock and disgust, shaking her head every once in a while when Daniel got to a blatant lie.

"After Ginny punched me, I just tried to get away from them. When I tried to go past them though Harry punched me, and I fell backwards into a wall. I think he stunned me because the next thing I remember is Dad waking me up." All the Professors, save for Snape, turned to look at Harry and Ginny in a mix of disgust and contempt.

"Well, what do you have to say for yourself?" McGonagall said as she prepared to go into full lecture mode.

"That was the most ridiculous batch of lies I've ever heard."

'Ginny I don't think we're going to be able to keep our bond a secret now, at least not from them.'

'We can at least hide how well formed it is, remember the book said that mental communication is a very advanced stage that most never reach.'

'You're right, we'll stick to sharing emotions if they ask.' Harry received the equivalent of a mental nod from Ginny. In the time it had taken them to have their short conversation the room around them had broken out into a loud argument. Apparently most of the room believed Daniel.

"I'll tell you the truth, but I'd like to ask if Madam Pomfrey and Professor Snape could leave the room it's a little personal." Dumbledore and McGonagall looked ready to object but Lily stepped forward.

"I agree with Harry. I think I know what he's about to say and it should only be in the presence of those required to be here." Harry smiled gratefully at his mother as Snape and Madam Pomfrey made their way out of the room.

"Alright Harry, please tell us your version of events." Harry nodded and pulled up the memory of his fight with Daniel, narrating it word for word.

"After Daniel pulled me into the secret passage he started accusing Ginny and I of lying." He paused glancing towards Ginny for a second. She smiled and nodded to him.

In this second McGonagall was able to ask, "Lying about what?"

"Ginny and I are soul bonded." McGonagall's mouth fell open in shock while Flitwick let out an excited squeak and fell out of his chair. Dumbledore managed to keep his face neutral except for the slight raising of his eyebrows and the increase of the twinkle in his eyes.

"But they're lying! After Dad told me about the 'bond' I looked it up in the library. It said two soul mates needed to know each other since they were really young." McGonagall began nodding her head vigorously, while Flitwick reclaimed his seat and looked at his two students in wonder.

"Daniel, Ginny and I have been best friends since we were eight! The only reason you don't believe in our bond is because you're jealous that I'm with Ginny and you're not." McGonagall was now looking suspiciously at Daniel who was gaping like a fish, as he tried to find a come back.

"I believe there is a very simple solution to this. I know the spell to determine if two people are soul mates, and if they are bonded. As long as Harry and Ginny are willing to undergo the spell. I can perform it immediately." Harry and Ginny looked at each other nervously. If Dumbledore performed the spell, it would show just how strong their bond had become in the last year and a half. Seeing no way around it they nodded their heads.

"Excellent! Now then this won't hurt a bit, Soulis Pairis!" Once again nothing happened at first. Daniel looked excited for a second, but then the glow started.

Instead of the purple that had enveloped them last time, this time a deep red aura began to glow around them. The red quickly became brighter and brighter until Lily, McGonagall, and Daniel turned away. Harry and Ginny unconsciously moved closer together and grasped each others hand. The second their hands touched an explosion of orange and gold sprung from that point mixing with the red to create a living flame that seemed to emanate around them. Fawkes trilled happily from his perch and flew down to land lightly on Ginny's shoulders.

"Finite," The glow disappeared like someone had flipped a light switch. Harry and Ginny blushed nervously under the looks of awe from McGonagall, Lily, and Flitwick. Dumbledore was smiling kindly at them although the twinkle in his eyes looked more like a camera flash than a twinkle. Daniel was red faced and staring in anger and hatred at them. James seemed like he wanted to be stunned but was too busy agreeing with Daniel to show anything more than an icy glare.

"That was quite impressive, Mr. Potter, Ms. Weasley. I haven't seen a bond as strong as yours in many decades. However, it still does not answer the question as to who attacked who today however." Harry sagged in defeat then played his trump card.

"I'm willing to submit my memory of events to a pensieve so you can all see it." Daniel's look of triumph immediately changed to one of confusion as he looked from Dumbledore to Harry.

"I'll allow it." Dumbledore turned and took out the large stone basin from behind his desk. Harry walked up and using his own wand placed the memory in the pensieve.

Dumbledore nodded and then he, McGonagall, Flitwick, Lily, and James entered the pensieve. Harry and Ginny were left to glare at Daniel who was looking in wonder at the tub his parents had just been sucked into. Several minutes later they returned.

McGonagall was looking at Daniel in shock and shaking her head in horror. Flitwick returned to his chair mumbling things under his breath, "reproachful... attempting to hit a girl... of all the rude immoral things..." Lily was looking sadly at her son as she returned to Harry's side and placed a comforting arm on his shoulder. Dumbledore gazed sadly at Daniel the twinkle in his eyes greatly diminished.

"Well, after reviewing the memory Mr. Potter submitted, I have come to a conclusion. Twenty points from Ravenclaw to Mr. Potter and Ms. Weasley each for physical violence, and ten points from Gryffindor for Mr. Potter for instigating the entire event." James and Daniel quickly agreed with the Headmasters assessment while McGonagall looked torn before nodding reluctantly. Flitwick and Lily both immediately began protesting, but Dumbledore simply waved their comments aside. Harry and Ginny had both expected Dumbledore to play favorites with Daniel, so they weren't too shocked.

"That is final! Now if that is all you should all return to your respective rooms. Minerva, Filius, please stay behind I have some issues I wish to discuss with you." The Potters plus Ginny took the hint and left the Headmasters office. Harry, Ginny and Lily hanging back behind James and Daniel who were talking in hushed whispers. Harry wasn't paying much attention until he heard Ginny's name.

"Dad, I still like Ginny though!" Daniel whispered a little loudly to James.

"Don't worry about her son, there are plenty of more intelligent, better looking girls worthy of your status. Let Harry have the average, plain looking one." Harry's temper flared, and it was only made worse as Ginny's anger boiled through the bond intensifying his own.

Lily seeing a confrontation coming only had enough time to grab one of them. Thinking Harry was less likely to hit his own father she grabbed Ginny's arm holding her back. Thanks to Harry's intensified anger through the bond, Lily should have grabbed both of them.

Harry reached his father in two strides and grabbed his shoulder. He spun him around and before James had any time to respond Harry's fist connected with James nose. The weak cartilage meeting the force of Harry's fist, multiplied by the velocity in which James was traveling thanks to Harry spinning him around, resulted in James nose breaking with a sickening crunch. James stumbled backwards in pain and finally lost his footing falling down hard.

"You have no right to talk about Ginny like that! I always wondered where Daniel got his rude manners from, and now I know he picked up every single one of them from you." James wasn't paying much attention trying in vain to stop the blood pouring out of his nose.

"You punched me! You brat how dare you!" Harry gave a frustrated growl and turned to walk away, but Daniel was moving to get in his way. Harry flicked his hand in Daniel's direction however and barely noticed as Daniel flew backwards down the hall. Ginny freed her arm from Lily and rushed after Harry down the hall. Lily paused only a second to address her husband.

"James, go home you're not welcome in my quarters tonight." James stared at his wife in total shock for a minute before going red in the face.

"What do you mean?" Lily sighed in exasperation.

"Exactly how I said it, go home to Potter Manor. You're not welcome in my quarters tonight, or for the rest of this week. Think about what you did tonight, and when you realize how horrible you've been then come and see me." Without another word Lily turned and left a flabbergasted James staring at the spot she had just been in.

Break

Lily wasn't able to find Harry or Ginny for the rest of the night and resigned herself to waiting until the next morning. The next day at breakfast she stopped by the Ravenclaw table and asked Harry and Ginny to meet her in her office for lunch.

At lunch Harry and Ginny arrived and cautiously looked around the office as if suspecting some sort of trap. Lily simply waved them in and tried to start a conversation. There was awkward small talk for a



little while until a house elf arrived with the food. The silence while they were eating was suffocating. Finally Lily tried something that always worked with James and Daniel.

"So Harry, Ginny, do either of you like Quidditch?" Harry and Ginny glanced at one another before Harry answered.

"Brooms are too restricting, we want to fly without them." Lily smiled in understanding and decided to pursue it a little farther.

"So, how are both of you in transfiguration? If you're good enough maybe Minerva will be willing to teach you how to become an Animagus." She didn't miss the nervous glance between the two, or the way they began to uncomfortably shift in their seats. "You didn't! You're just like your father!"

"What?" Harry asked looking anywhere but Lily.

"You two already took an Animagus potion didn't you?" Harry and Ginny had a silent conversation, before Ginny turned back to Lily.

"We did. I'm a falcon, and Harry's a hawk." Lily's mouth dropped open, she hadn't expected them to openly admit to it. "Please don't tell anyone." Lily looked torn between wanting to earn her sons trust and her basic motherly instinct to force him to not do it. Finally she came to a decision.

"Fine, I won't tell anyone," Both children sighed in relief before Lily continued. "But, I must be present whenever you two try to change yourselves. I'm not going to let either of you accidentally kill yourselves trying to do this." Harry and Ginny were silent for a minute before Harry tried to protest feebly.

"But mum, we've already managed to transform our arms and one leg each." Lily's eyes widened in shock.

"How long have you been practicing this?" Harry realized his slip and tried to hide it.

"Well, umm, since last year, I think maybe umm October. It took us a really long time." This backfired even worse as Lily made the next logical conclusion.

"October! Ginny had only been in school a month then, how on earth were either of you able to even start your transformations." Harry winced, but Ginny already had a response ready.

"Harry's been studying magic since before we met, and he taught me everything he knows. We're up to OWLs spell work." It was only a small lie, they were actually up to post NEWTS spell work. Lily seemed suspicious but took the information she was given.

"You really should be getting to your next class, but promise me you won't work on your transformations without telling me first." After getting affirmative answers from both of them she let them leave.

Break

Harry and Ginny kept their promise to Lily and took her to an empty classroom every night. She would grade papers while Harry and Ginny worked on the transformation for an hour. Afterwards they would go to the Founders room and practice magic, sword fighting, and potion making while Lily returned to her quarters.

There was a noticeable absence of James from the school meals, and for two months he was only seen on the few days Remus had to 'visit his sick mother'. Harry knew from his mother that James had been trying desperately to win her back without actually apologizing to Harry or Ginny. Lily had so far been steadfast in denying James, but Harry could see she was missing him.

Finally in December Harry told his mother to just take him back, but to keep him away from them. Lily agreed and Harry was pleased to find she kept to his word and James was no where to be seen whenever he and Ginny met with Lily.

Around that time Ron began actively trying to keep Harry and Ginny apart. Ginny ignored this completely going so far as to hex Ron once. Snape had witnessed this, but instead of taking points had subtly nodded towards Ginny and then hurried past. It didn't take long for Harry and Ginny to figure out that Daniel had started telling people about the bond. This became glaringly obvious when Fred and George walked over to the Ravenclaw table one day during lunch and began loudly welcoming Harry to the family and asking when the wedding was.

By the start of the new term in January, Harry and Ginny had done two things they were both very proud of. One was that they completed the first of their Animagus transformations. Lily had been there when they finished them and was ecstatic for her son and Ginny. She'd even offered to buy both of the congratulatory presents, but both had denied saying all they wanted to do was fly.

The only problem with that were the Dementors stationed around Hogwarts to catch Crouch if he should attempt to enter the school. That however, brought Harry and Ginny to the second thing they were proud of. Both could now conjure a fully corporeal patronus. Harry's was a familiar looking tiger while Ginny's was a distinct looking wolf.

As the year progressed Harry and Ginny grew closer with Neville and Luna. They soon started helping each other with their work. Neville was a Herbology genius, while Luna turned out to be extremely adept at potion making, both skills had for the most part escaped Harry and Ginny. They were able to offer help in DADA, Transfiguration, and Charms. Harry was also able to give Neville the little help he needed in Ancient Runes.

For the time being Harry was the only one taking Arithmancy, but Ginny and Luna would both be starting next year. Harry still shared stories of the crazy Professor Dent and her love of towels. This got the group kicked out of the library several times for laughing too loudly.

Around March, Harry gave Neville and Luna books on occlumency encouraging them to learn the delicate art. He hoped that by next year he could introduce them to the Founder's room, but he didn't want Dumbledore to find out.

By the end of the school year Harry and Ginny were halfway done with their wolf and tiger transformations, respectively. Dumbledore announced at the end of the year feast that the Dementors were being removed from Hogwarts because it was believed that Crouch had likely fled to some far away country and disappeared into anonymity.

So it was with dreams of flying for the first time as a hawk and a falcon that Harry and Ginny excitedly boarded the train and headed home.

A/N

Ok, that's done. If you don't think a 13 year old can break a grown mans nose, he used some magic to make the punch harder. Lily saw Harry use wandless magic on Daniel but pushed it off as accidental. Daniel is to stupid to realize Harry didn't use a wand. I couldn't figure out how to convey that.

A side note, if you check out my profile i have three ideas on what my next story should be. I need something to dabble with when i get writers block on this one so if any of you like one feel free to message me and ill start dabbling more with the one that gets the most responses.

One more thing before i let you go, i'm looking for ideas for a song to use during the yule ball, i have some ideas but nothing seems to fit for Harry and Ginny. Any suggestions would be awesome, and if i use yours you get a special dedication in the yule ball chapter.

There is a pop culture reference in here, it stands out slightly so you have to find it without any clues. 200 reviews! Next chapter hopefully thursday, but maybe friday. Chapter 10: Summer/ Triwizard cup/ The Champion

## Chapter 10: Summer/ Two Champions

Indescribable.

That was the only word Harry and Ginny had for flying. Riding thermals thousands of feet up into the sky then tucking their wings into their sides and diving towards the earth at impossible speeds. Nothing could sufficiently describe the rush that each of them got from that experience. The improved eyesight was another thing neither had really expected. From thousands of feet in the air they could see the smallest creatures, scurrying around on the earth below them, in perfect clarity.

For the first time in their lives Harry and Ginny felt the true unrestricted freedom that only flying could bring. They spent almost the entire first day home soaring, diving, rolling, and gliding through the sky. For a few hours Lily had sat in the backyard of the house watching the two children play happily in the sky.

Finally as the sun began to set Harry and Ginny were forced to come down so that Ginny could go home. Once Ginny was gone Harry ate as quickly as he could. Daniel was spending a few days at the Weasley's but James was still staying at the Manor and had just gotten home from work. Harry left quickly to avoid the thick tension between himself and his father.

Break

July 31st came quickly that summer. This time though, Harry had something to look forward too. Lily was throwing him a party. There were two separate parties. Daniel was having his at the Weasley's and it would be another large one. Harry was having another smaller party at Potter Manor. He didn't mind that there would only be a few guests at his, he was just happy to be having a party for once.

Break

James, Daniel, and Remus were preparing to leave Potter Manor and floo to the Burrow. The only problem was that Sirius refused to go with them.

"Padfoot come on, we're going to be late!" Sirius didn't move from his chair as James spoke to him.

"No thanks James, I'm going to stay here for Harry's party. I might stop by later."

"Why would you want to stay here? Harry and his nerdy friends are just going to sit around talking about school all day!" Sirius looked at James in confusion, wondering how he could talk about his own sons friends like that.

"I don't mind, he's my godson. I should be here. Besides his friends are pretty cool, I sat with Ginny and him last summer. They're pretty funny kids." Instead of placating James, this only seemed to frustrate him.

"Yea but today is special! I'm giving Daniel the you-know-what's! I'll be helping him start a new generation of the Marauders this years! You should be there." James said excitedly making wild hand gestures to emphasize his point.

"I'll stop by after I give Harry his present, alright James." James reluctantly nodded and disappeared into the flames. Less than a minute after he left Ginny came stumbling through the fireplace just in time to be caught by Harry as he entered the room.

"Thanks Harry, Happy Birthday!" Ginny hugged him and gave him a quick kiss on the cheek. Behind her Sirius made some inappropriate kissing faces and waggled his eyebrows teasingly. Harry could only roll his eyebrows in response to his godfathers actions.

"Thanks Gin. Neville and Luna should be here soon, I thought we could go flying!" Sirius who had returned to reading a muggle magazine looked up and smiled widely at the mention of flying.

"Alright!"

Break

The day turned out to be enjoyable for everyone. Ginny, Neville, and Luna had been the only students Harry had invited. He'd never been close to his house mates. Lily was there, along with Sirius and later in the day Molly showed up to help prepare dinner and wish Harry a happy birthday. They spent the day flying out back and Harry and Ginny found that after flying in their forms, flying on a broom was

simple. Despite the fact that they had to use old brooms they easily made Sirius look like a nervous first year in comparison. After cake Harry was forced in front of a pile of presents and told to open them.

He opened his present from Lily first, it was the first actual present she had given him since he was seven. Inside a plain looking box he found two sets of expensive looking dress robes, one the same emerald green as his eyes, and the second navy blue with gold trimmings for his house colors. To most fourteen year old males clothes would be a pretty horrible birthday present. Harry knew his mother didn't know enough about him to get him something meaningful, but his Hogwarts letter had arrived that morning requiring dress robes for the coming year. So Harry kissed his mother on the cheek and thanked her for the gift.

The Weasley's sent over a box of homemade fudge, a book on chastity from Percy, and a box of prank items from the twins. Harry showed the book to Ginny who rolled her eyes and shook her head exasperatedly. The twins pranks which were in a box marked WWW were pretty advanced and Harry had a hard time believing they had only gotten three OWLS.

Neville gave him a seventh year Defense Against the Dark Arts book. It was actually one Harry didn't already own, and it touched on both the use of Dark Arts as well as countering them. Harry looked forward to looking through that one. Luna told him that he would be receiving a lifetime subscription to The Quibbler. This was actually a good present because Harry enjoyed reading the tabloid in his free time to relax.

Finally Harry reached Ginny's present which was wrapped in a small box. They had agreed long ago to keep their presents small and meaningful rather than grand and expensive. Harry's face still lit up in happiness when he pulled out a hawk shaped pendant attached to a silver chain from the box. Etched into the back of the pendant were the letters HP&GW. Harry pulled the chain over his head before thanking Ginny both mentally and aloud.

Finally Harry opened the present from Sirius. Inside a long thin brown box wrapped in gold and blue wrapping paper was a Cleansweep 7. Harry pulled the broom out reverently admiring the craftsmanship.

"Listen Harry, I know it's not the best, but when you're mum told me you liked to fly. I thought she meant recreationally, not that you could out fly any professional Quidditch player. If I'd known that, that would be a Firebolt." Sirius stuttered out nervously. Harry looked appreciatively at his godfather.

"Don't worry about it Sirius. This is a great present, I don't like playing Quidditch anyway. I just like flying." Sirius sighed in relief at Harry's words and sat back in his chair. Almost as quickly he sat back up again looking at the clock.

"Oh no I forgot to stop by Daniel's party! Sorry pup but I have to run or your dad will have my hide." Sirius pulled Harry into a tight hug.

"Don't worry Sirius, you were here most of the day." Sirius grabbed a handful of floo powder before turning to look back at Harry.

"How many times must I tell you? Call me Padfoot!" With that he was gone in a swirl of green flames, and Harry and his friends settled in the living room to talk and fool around until they had to leave.

Break

A heavily cloaked man made his way through a dark abandoned mansion. Years ago this mansion had been resplendent and a loving family had lived there. Tragedy had struck however and now the entire family was buried together down the hill in an old decrepit graveyard. For the past few nights however something had been different. A light had been shining from one of the second story windows. There were few people close enough to the house to see the light, and those who could knew well enough to ignore it.

The cloaked man entered this room. The room was large with a single fireplace against the far wall. In front of the fireplace was a high backed chair, curled on top of the chair was large black snake. The cloaked man crossed the room to the chair and knelt down subserviently next to a blonde haired man.

"My Lord, what is your bidding?" The cloaked man asked.



"Bring me the Potter boy! Use the tournament!" The words came from a raspy high pitched voice that seemed to emanate from a bundle of blankets on the seat of the chair.

"Yes my Lord. I shall bring the boy." The black cloaked man bowed his head and left the room in a hurry.

Break

Hundreds of miles away Harry Potter sat bolt upright in his bed. Almost as soon as he was awake however, the dream began fading from his memory. Even with his advanced occlumency he was unable to retrieve anything from the dream except the image of a large black snake. Finally he was forced to admit that it most likely wasn't important and went back to sleep.

Break

On Ginny's birthday the entire Potter family, along with all the Weasley's, Sirius, Remus, Neville, and Luna gathered at the Burrow. All those people in one spot meant that the party was held mostly outside. By noon Ron and Daniel were bugging James and the other Weasley brothers for a game of Quidditch. In the end however, they found themselves with an uneven team of nine. Harry was the one who presented the solution.

"Ginny, Neville, and I will play." James, Daniel, and Ron looked at the three of them as if Harry had insulted them.

"Harry, do you and your friends even know how to play Quidditch?" James asked rather condescendingly. Sirius gave him a pointed look of confusion, but James either missed it or ignored it.

"Of course we do. Now are you going to let us play or not?" Ron decided to be the idiot this time and stepped forward.

"We're playing a real game here, not some fun little pretend game. Ginny doesn't even know how to fly!" Before anyone else could respond Sirius began laughing hysterically drawing everyone's attention.

"You're kidding right Ron. Harry and Ginny are the best flyers I've ever seen! They could fly circles around all of us." This received very

skeptical looks from everyone, and an embarrassed blush from both Harry and Ginny.

"Fine if you're so confident Padfoot, they're on your team." Sirius smiled widely and quickly agreed.

In the end the teams ended up being Daniel, Ron, James, Fred, Remus, and Bill against Harry, Ginny, Sirius, Neville, George, and Charlie. Ron and Neville were both placed as keepers and flew up to their makeshift goal posts. James, Remus, Bill, Harry, Ginny, and Sirius were chasers. Fred and George were of course the beaters. This left Daniel and Charlie to square off as seekers.

The game began with James and Harry facing each other as Mr. Weasley threw the quaffle in between them. In a second Harry had the ball and was around an over confident James. He flew headlong at Bill, but just as they were about to collide he banked away and threw the quaffle in the opposite direction. Bill had started to turn with Harry and didn't have time to react as Ginny grabbed the quaffle and headed towards the lonely Ron.

Ron for his part sneered at his sister and held his position. Ginny just smirked to herself and rocketed towards him at insane speeds. Ron stayed where he was but his sneer began to fade as Ginny approached at dangerous speeds. At the last possible second she barrel rolled right and neatly placed the quaffle through the right hoop as she flew by. Ron stared at her in shock as she flew back towards the center of the field. Finally James retrieved the ball and roughly shoved into Ron's hands so he could throw it.

Ten minutes later the score was 90-0 in favor of Harry's team and James was on his first break away of the game. He easily got around Neville who was not as good a flier as Harry and Ginny. Another ten minutes had the score at 150-30, and James called a time out.

"It's not fair Harry and Ginny are using their bond to help their playing." Bill, Charlie, Sirius, Remus, and Neville all looked at James in confusion but Harry knew exactly where this was going.

"Fine, I'll switch with Charlie and play seeker." This apparently wasn't what James had been hoping for and after some light

negotiating with Charlie they returned to the field. This time with Harry flying high above searching for the snitch.

Two minutes.

That's how long it took Harry to spot the snitch. In those two minutes Ginny had scored four times, while James had gotten more frustrated and reckless. Without thinking of where Daniel was Harry took off after the snitch.

Daniel was actually farther away from the snitch, but while Harry was flying a Cleansweep 7, Daniel was flying a Firebolt, James had given him for his birthday. He managed to catch up to Harry just as the snitch went into a ninety degree dive. With gravity working in favor of the brooms they were evenly matched speed wise and Daniel and Harry plummeted to earth neck and neck.

They followed the snitch as it got closer and closer to the ground. Finally at ten feet Daniel pulled up convinced that Harry was about to smash into the ground. Harry kept chasing the snitch until he finally closed his fingers around it about four feet from the ground. Somehow, in the 2 milliseconds he had to pull up his broom, Harry managed to almost do it.

Instead of crashing into the ground full force Harry managed to bring the handle up. This slowed his downward momentum but he still kept moving downwards at an angle rather quickly. He crashed into the ground with both feet and rolled off his broom to lessen the impact. The momentum still caused him to roll about ten feet before coming to rest on his back. As everyone began rushing towards him he held up his hand, the snitch still firmly clasped in his fist.

Break

Four hours later, Daniel, Ron, and James were still throwing a temper tantrum at being thoroughly beaten by Harry and Ginny. Harry and Ginny had long since stopped paying any attention to them and were currently walking hand in hand around the pond behind the Burrow. Mrs. Weasley hadn't trusted them of course and had sent Fred and George to watch them. That had lasted about twenty seconds before Ginny threatened to bat-boogey them and Harry subtly cast a confounds charm on them. Now Harry and Ginny

were alone, by the pond, with the half moon shining down on them. It was slightly romantic.

They stopped once they had reached the far side of the pond and Harry nervously began fiddling with something in his pocket.

"Ummm Ginny, I wa-" His voice cracked, and blushing, he cleared his throat before continuing. "I was wondering if you... well I know we're still kind of young... but would ummm..." He pulled a small box out of his pocket and Ginny's eyes immediately widened and locked onto the small box as Harry fiddled with it.

"Harry, are you asking me to marry you?" Harry's eyes widened in horror and he began violently shaking his head.

"What! N-No! I-I wanted to know if you wanted to be my girlfriend!" Ginny sighed in relief and both teens started laughing loudly at the situation. Finally they calmed down and Ginny grabbed Harry's empty hand.

"I would love to be your girlfriend Harry." Harry whooped in happiness and before he was even consciously aware of it, his lips were attached to Ginny's. The world seemed to explode as they both melted into each other. Finally after what seemed like an eternity, but was only about five seconds, Harry pulled back though he still rested his forehead on hers.

"That was..." Harry started.

"amazing." Ginny finished his thought.

"Yea, by the way, I got this for you." Harry brought the box he had been holding up and flipped open the lid. Inside was a silver charm bracelet with three charms: a phoenix, a tiger, and a falcon.

"Oh Harry!" Ginny flung her arms around his neck and pulled his head back down to bring their lips together again.

Break

Near the end of August, James supplied tickets for Daniel, Ron, the twins and himself to attend the Quidditch world cup. Bill, Charlie, and Arthur had been unable to go do to work, and Percy would be

working at the Cup with his new boss Reginald Fairfield. James of course offered a ticket to Ginny, but when he steadfastly ignored Harry, she flat out rejected the offer.

So while the others went to watch Ireland dominate Bulgaria, and then spend the night being chased around by Death Eaters, Harry and Ginny relaxed. They flew for several hours in their Animagus forms, had lunch with Lily, and when Lily went to buy groceries, cuddled on the couch. They still hadn't told any of their families they were officially dating.

Break

Harry and Ginny spent a good portion of the last week of summer debating how they would reveal to their families that they were officially dating. In the end they decided for the shock and awe method. So on September 1st, Harry waited with Lily on Platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$  for the Weasley's. James and Daniel were farther down the platform, doing something Harry could care less about.

The Weasley's began piling onto that platform at five to eleven and immediately began dispersing amongst the crowd to find their friends and get compartments. Ginny knew where Harry was and began making her way towards him, her parents followed a short distance behind her. Ginny caught Harry's eyes and smirked deviously.

Running the last ten feet between them Ginny leapt in Harry's waiting arms, firmly planting her lips on his. They held that pose for a few seconds before breaking apart and quickly disappearing onto the train. Behind them Lily, Molly, and Arthur were still staring open mouthed at the spot the two teens had just occupied. It wasn't until Harry and Ginny innocently stuck their heads out the window of their compartment and called out to their shocked parents, that they snapped out of it.

"Ginerva Weasley! What do you think you two are doing?" Ginny smiled innocently down at her mother from the train.

"Kissing my boyfriend hello." Mrs. Weasley blinked and then narrowed her eyes.

"You two aren't allowed to start dating yet! You're too young!" Ginny was about to respond angrily but was cut off by the train's whistle blowing as it began to pull out of the station.

"I guess we'll have to finish this conversation in June! Bye mum!" Before Molly could come up with an appropriate response the train had left the platform taking Harry and Ginny with it.

"Don't worry Molly, I'll keep an eye on them. I'll have to get Sirius to give Harry the Talk." Lily shuddered involuntarily.

"Why Sirius? Can't James do it?" Lily winced at her slip and turned pleading eyes to Arthur who had asked the question.

"James and Harry are in the middle of an argument. I wouldn't be surprised if either of them refused to willingly talk to the other for a few years. James said some very unforgivable things and is too stubborn to apologize." Arthur nodded, he understood perfectly a few years ago he and Bill had gotten into a minor disagreement and allowed pride to let it continue for nearly a year.

"Lily is there anyway you can find me a way to Hogwarts to talk to Ginny? I'll need to give her the Talk soon too."

"Why don't we wait until next summer for that? Those two love each other but I don't think they'll move that fast for a while yet. Besides they're both responsible." Molly nodded, though she still looked worried.

Break

"Which is why Hogwarts will be hosting the Triwizard Tournament for the first time in almost a century!" Dumbledore was standing at the Head table and had just dropped that bomb on the student body.

"Two galleons says Daniel tries to enter." Ginny rolled her eyes at her boyfriend.

"Do you really think I'm stupid enough to gamble on a losing bet?" Harry laughed and returned his attention to Dumbledore as he called the attention back to him.

"It has been decided that only those students of age will be allowed to enter their names into consideration for competition." There was a loud protest from most tables, but none more so than Daniel and Ron. Harry and Ginny could care less about it.

"The eligible students from Beauxbatons and Durmstrang will be arriving two days before Halloween and the Champions shall be chosen on Halloween. Now then I hope you will all fully support whoever is chosen as the Hogwarts champion and I wish you a good night."

Break

Harry and Ginny sat on a conjured blanket under a large tree overlooking the lake. Ginny sat with her head resting on Harry's chest while Harry had his arm fixed securely around her shoulders. They been sitting like this for almost an hour in total silence just enjoying the time spent together. Harry had asked a house elf to bring a picnic lunch out to them.

The blissful silence of the afternoon was shattered rather abruptly by the appearance of the two people Harry and Ginny wanted to see less than anyone else.

"Ginny! What are you doing? Get away from him!" Ron was storming down the lawn towards where Harry and Ginny were still sitting cuddled up together. Ginny waited until Ron was within normal hearing distance to respond instead of yelling. Behind him Daniel and Hermione stood, Hermione not appearing to care about the entire situation and Daniel glaring hatefully at Harry.

"I'm not moving Ron. It's much too comfortable where I am. Please leave." This only seemed to infuriate Ron more and he pulled his wand out. Trying to make a show of solidarity Daniel pulled his wand out too, although he kept it aimed at the ground.

"I'm not leaving unless you come with me. I won't let you humiliate yourself by pretending you like him." Ginny growled in frustration and lifted her head from Harry's chest to glare at her brother.

"I really, really don't care what you have to say Ron. I thought the boy wonder over there had told everyone about the bond."

"He did! I'm with him though, we think Harry is faking it and making you think you have to love him." Harry and Ginny rolled their eyes before they stood up and began walking past the trio.

"Leave me alone Ron. I'm happy, so you should be happy for me. If not you should seriously reconsider your definition of family." Ginny said as she passed by Ron. He stood gaping at her for a minute but by the time he came up with something to say Harry and Ginny were almost twenty meters away.

"I'm telling mum!"

"She already knows!" Then Harry and Ginny disappeared into the school and walked hand in hand down to the kitchens to enjoy their picnic in the kitchens.

Break

Beauxbatons and Durmstrang arrived in a show of exaggerated dance moves and fancy, but meaningless, spell work. Harry and Ginny had found the entire affair amazingly boring, especially since they had been too involved in their own mental conversation to even pay the slightest amount of attention to the beautiful Beauxbatons girls or the rugged Durmstrang guys. Daniel and Ron, as predicted, had tried to enter the contest and ended up with rather long beards sprouting from their faces.

So Halloween arrived and the students all gathered in the Great Hall for the feast and the selection of the Champions. They were forced to sit anxiously first through dinner and then through long boring commencement speeches. Finally the Goblet of Fire was brought up by Professor Moody and the names began to shoot out of it.

"The champion for Durmstrang," Dumbledore paused for the mandatory dramatic effect. "Viktor Krum!" The hall erupted into cheers for the celebrated Quidditch player. A second after Krum disappeared through a side door another piece of paper shot out.

"The Beauxbatons champion will be... Fleur Delacour!" Nearly the entire male population of Hogwarts leapt to their feet cheering loudly for the girl. Only a handful of the first years and Harry managed to control themselves.



"The champion from Hogwarts will be... Cedric Diggory!" The Hufflepuff table exploded, making almost twice as much noise for their Champion. The other houses clapped appreciatively as Cedric rose and exited through the side door.

"I'd like to tha-" Dumbledore stopped his speech as a fourth piece of paper shot out of the cup. The hall fell silent as Dumbledore snatched up the piece of paper and read it first once then twice.

"Daniel Potter!"

A/N

Almost positive this is my longest chapter by far. Only two major things to mention first off Lily and James are not getting divorced and never ever ever ever ever in any of my stories will you ever see that sleezeball Snape allowed to have a romantic relationship. Ever!

Secondly, to all you Americans as you probably know its Superbowl weekend! This is bad for several reasons. First off i'm going to be very busy and most likely won't have time to write much. Secondly i left you with a really nice cliff hanger and most of you are probably going to mention why Daniel was picked instead of Harry. If you look at the dream sequence thing, Voldy just said Potter boy, not Harry. So Death Eaters being stupid didn't realize the difference.

Thanks for all the awesome song ideas, i kind of have my mind fixed on one right now, but you'll have to wait and see. I set up a poll in my profile, at least i think i did, for the story options. So far by my mental count 2 was in the lead, if you want to try the polls its what ill go by unless no one really uses it.

Superbowl prediction: Giants 24-21, on the off chance the Giants lose i may slip into an unshakable week long depression where i will be unable to write. So it's in your best interests to root for the Giants.

Thanks for all the reviews lets go for 300! There is a pop culture reference in here i don't know if people outside of America will be able to get it but its there. Next Chapter: The First Task/ First Date/ Sirius attempts the Talk.

## Chapter 11: First Date/ First Task

We missed the point of living  
So caught up in this moment.  
We threw out all convictions  
And traded them for substance.  
This life you hold so near will fade in time. -'The Cheyenne Line' By  
The Ataris

The Great Hall fell totally silent as every head turned to look at a shocked Daniel. He was staring wide eyed at Dumbledore. The silence only lasted a few seconds before pandemonium broke loose. Several Professors were forced to try and keep control over the student population, as Messer's Bagman, Fairfield, Karkaroff, and Madame Maxine all pushed forward trying to look at the paper in Dumbledore's hand.

Lily and James were on their feet pushing through the crowds of people towards where Daniel was still sitting in shock. Lily had a look of horror and worry etched on her face. James appeared to be switching back and forth between concern and a proud smile. During this time Ginny and Harry sat back enjoying the mass confusion going on around them.

Soon a low chant began to fill the hall. It began at the Slytherin table but was soon picked up by the Hufflepuff table. The two tables were screaming "Cheater!" over and over again, most exaggerating their point by pointing at Daniel, who by this point was surrounded by Lily and James. James did his part to glare at all the students. Before the chants could continue for long Dumbledore raised his wand and created a loud sonic boom.

"Daniel, please proceed through the doorway." Lily immediately placed herself between the old man and her son.

"No! I will not allow this! Daniel will not be participating in this barbaric event!" Dumbledore sighed and turned to Mr. Fairfield who stepped forward uneasily to confront the raging mother.

"I'm sorry Mrs. Potter. His name came out of the Goblet. He is now entered into a binding magical contract. There's nothing we can do." James nodded to the man and gently pulled Lily back with one hand

as he pushed Daniel forward with the other. Daniel appeared to have been greatly disturbed by the earlier chanting and nervously made his way through the door.

"All student's are to immediately return to their common rooms!" Dumbledore shouted as he, Lily, James, Bagman, Fairfield, Karkaroff, Maxine, Moody, and McGonagall disappeared through the side door.

'So do you think he really put his name in?' Harry glanced over at Ginny who was walking hand in hand with him back to the Ravenclaw common room.

'Honestly, I don't know something just doesn't seem right about all this.' Ginny nodded her agreement as they entered the common room. They took their usual spots near the fireplace and Ginny curled up next to him with her head resting on his chest.

They were soon joined by Luna who sat down across from the couple and unrolled a copy of the Quibbler. Before she began reading however she looked over at Harry.

"I hope your brother will be alright Harry." Harry smiled appreciatively at her, before returning his gaze to the fire as he once again lost himself in thought.

Break

The next morning Harry and Ginny watched as Daniel entered the Great Hall and sat by himself at one end of the Gryffindor table. Ron and Hermione entered a few minutes later and sat as far away as possible from him, occasionally glaring down the table at him. The rest of his house gave him a wide berth although Colin did try to talk to him. He was quickly told to go away.

Daniel only seemed to sink further into depression when all of Slytherin house entered wearing pins proclaiming 'Daniel Stinks!'. A portion of the house led by Draco Malfoy began handing out pins to the rest of the Great Hall. Harry wasn't very surprised when all of Hufflepuff and nearly a quarter of Ravenclaw began wearing the pins proudly on their chests.

Daniel rushed out of the Great Hall shortly after that. Harry didn't see his brother again until the joint Gryffindor-Ravenclaw charms class later that day. He was sitting by himself in the back of the classroom. Harry being the kind person he was nodded to his normal partner Neville and walked to the back of the class. This drew everyone's attention as the rivalry between Harry and Daniel had become legendary in the last year or so.

"Mind if I sit here?" Daniel looked up at his brother and scowled at him.

"Why? Come to gloat?" Harry sighed and rolled his eyes.

"No, I came to sit with my brother. No matter how much I might personally dislike you, you're going through a hard time and we're family." Daniel's scowl lessened slightly and he returned his gaze to the front of the room before grunting his assent.

Harry took a seat next to Daniel as the lesson began. They were doing summoning charms today. Harry had already mastered the charm long ago and instead of practicing it watched as Daniel attempted it.

"Asayo quill!" Harry watched as Daniel mispronounced the spell and the quill he had been trying to summon didn't move. Daniel tried several more times getting more and more frustrated as he went. Finally Harry decided to step in.

"Daniel. You're pronouncing the spell wrong. It's A-see-o not A-say-o." Harry said it very kindly, and Daniel glanced at him then tried the spell again, this time pronouncing it correctly. The quill flew into his waiting hand.

Daniel made no motion to thank Harry or even acknowledge his help, Harry turned back towards his own quill. Just as he was about to cast his spell, Daniel muttered "Thanks," Harry smiled inwardly and returned to his work.

Break

The second Saturday of November, a week before the first task, was the first Hogsmeade trip of the year. For Harry and Ginny this was an important day since it would also be their first official date, and

Ginny's first time in Hogsmeade. Harry wasn't exactly sure what you were supposed to do on a date but had decided on taking Ginny someplace to eat.

Harry had heard several older Ravenclaw students talking about a cafe called Madam Pudifoot's. Figuring this would be a good date spot, Harry led Ginny through Hogsmeade to the shop early in the day. Ginny having never been to the town before was up for pretty much anything.

Ginny and Harry arrived at the cafe just before noon. It was a small quiet place and from the outside seemed normal. Once inside however Harry and Ginny were immediately set upon by the noxious odor of coffee and tea mixing together. After that their eyes were nearly blinded by the bright pinks and reds all over the place. It took less than five seconds after they walked through the door for Ginny to turn to Harry.

"Harry, would you be disappointed if I said I never wanted to come to this place, ever again." Harry was already pulling her back out the door before she'd even finished talking.

"No I wouldn't. How about we just go to Honeydukes?" Ginny's eyes widened, she'd heard about the candy shop from her brothers and desperately wanted to try some.

Twenty minutes later found Harry's arms filled with candy as Ginny walked in front of him grabbing anything that caught her attention. Perhaps he shouldn't have offered to buy her whatever she wanted. Finally Harry and Ginny left the candy store, Harry still weighed down with candy, but also four galleons lighter.

Next they stopped at The Three Broomsticks. Inside they were able to enjoy a butterbeer and a quiet meal. Well, not very quiet since the place was packed, but they managed to find themselves a somewhat secluded table. They sat peacefully holding hands and just watching as all the students and villagers moved around the restaurant interacting.

After lunch they went to Zonkos where they met up with Neville and Luna. After a half hour in the store the four went to look at the Shrieking Shack. After that they parted with Neville and Luna and

the couple returned to Hogwarts, where Harry had something special planned.

Ginny knew Harry had been planning this for two weeks and didn't expect to be disappointed. When she stepped into his mother's office however, she was floored. The ceiling had been charmed to show a crystal clear night sky, during a meteor shower. The floor had been turned into a smooth cut lawn, it was the right type of grass that was spongy and comfortable to sight or lay on. In the center of the room, which had been cleared of all furniture, there was a blanket and a large picnic basket.

"Harry this is amazing!" Without a second thought Ginny kicked off her shoes and socks and ran bare foot over the grass to the blanket. Harry followed closely behind her.

"Thanks. Mum did most of it, she's much better at Charms than I am. We have until curfew, so I brought along some things to distract us." Harry reached over to a stereo he had enchanted to play off magic. He turned on a CD and instead of the light rock he had been expecting a deep baritone voice started singing.

"My first, my last, my everything, And the answer to all my dreams!" Harry stopped the CD player as Ginny started to giggle. He pulled out the CD and looked at the title.

"Barry White's All Time Greatest Hits? Where the hell did th-SIRIUS!" Somewhere on the other side of the castle Sirius was laughing hysterically to himself. "Sorry Gin, that was supposed to be Bon Jovi." Ginny gave him a blank stare.

"Harry, I'm a pureblood witch remember, I don't know who any of these people are." Harry had the decency to look sheepish as he placed the correct CD into the stereo.

As the music began to play in the background Harry and Ginny laid down on the blanket staring at the open expanse of stars above them. The meteor shower created beautiful streaks of white and gold across the sky. Ginny lay with her head resting peacefully on Harry's shoulder, and Harry had his arm wrapped around her shoulders.

Although neither said a word, both agreed it was the most enjoyable, peaceful evening they'd ever had. No outside interferences just the two of them, some delicious sandwiches, music, and the unobstructed sky above them. It truly was the perfect first date.

Break

Four days later brought a rather chilling surprise for Harry. He and Ginny had been able to sneak out of the school and truly enjoy their flight forms. They'd soared high above the grounds. So high in fact they'd been able to see the stadium being erected for the first task of the tournament.

At first they were prepared to ignore it and circle back towards the castle. That was before a plume of fire shot thirty meters into the air, peaking their curiosity. So together they dove down and perched on the highest level of the stadium. Inside they were horrified to find four monstrous looking dragons. All being attended to by about twelve wizards each.

Three of the dragons were sedated and sleeping peacefully over their nests. The fourth one who's tail was covered in spikes was being stunned by almost twenty wizards now and still refused to go down. Then with a roar it sent another plume of fire at the dragon keepers. One of them didn't move fast enough and all the clothes on his left side immediately ignited. Two more wizards were on him in seconds extinguishing the flames and pulling him away for medical attention.

'Harry look Charlie!' Harry followed Ginny's gaze and found her older brother ducking behind a rock as another plume of fire passed the area he had just been in.

Finally after almost forty dragon keepers had joined the fight the large spike tailed dragon fell unconscious next to it's nest. Harry and Ginny took one more fearful glance at the dragons before taking off and heading back towards the castle.

Break

Later that night Harry cornered his brother as he left the Great Hall.

"Daniel the first task is Dragons." Harry said as Daniel looked at him in confusion.

"What?"

"The first task you have to fight a dragon or get past it or something. Don't ask how I know, just know that I do." Daniel analyzed him for a second before nodding and rushing off. Harry sighed hoping his brother would be smart enough to figure out a way around them.

Break

"Report Lucius."

"My Lord, Bartemius has entered Daniel Potter into the tournament as you asked." Lucius who had expected to be praised for the successful beginning was surprised when the small bundle that was Lord Voldemort screamed in anger.

"Daniel Potter! Why would he enter that mudblood?"

"Uh... H-He is the Boy-Who-Lived my Lord. Was he not the one who..." He paused looking for a nicer word for 'defeat'. "... tricked... you all those years ago?" Lucius winced as another high pitched scream came from the bundle.

"Of course not you fool! It was the other boy, Harry! He's the one who defeated me! Daniel Potter is a pathetic mudblood!" Lucius' mouth dropped open in shock upon receiving the news from his Lord.

"H-How do you wish to proceed my Lord?" The bundle stirred slightly as the creature within moved slightly. One fold momentarily moved allowing Lucius to see a large blood red eye staring out at him.

"There is nothing we can do. We cannot send word to Bartemius without risking the entire plan. Daniel Potter's blood will have to do. Once he is dead I shall find his brother and kill him personally." Lucius nodded again and bowed as he backed slowly out of the room leaving the large black snake to tend to his Master.

Break



Harry once again awoke with a start and gasped looking around his room. He knew he'd had a nightmare, but it was fading so quickly. All he remembered was something about blood, and Daniel maybe. Either way he was soon being lulled back to sleep. The soothing feelings coming through the bond when one of them slept was usually enough to lure the other to sleep in only a few minutes.

Break

The rest of the week leading up to the task was filled with more and more students sporting the anti-Daniel pins. When it was discovered that Cho Chang the most popular girl in Ravenclaw was dating Cedric, more of the house began wearing the pins. By the morning of the first task Harry, Ginny, and surprisingly Cedric were the only non Gryffindor's not wearing the pins.

Break

"It look's like Cedric's robes have caught fire folks!" Indeed the lower half of Cedric's robes were ablaze and he was hiding behind a rock while trying desperately to put them out.

Cedric was the first champion to try and get past a dragon. He was going against a Swedish Short Snout. When he'd first stepped out he'd been pale and shaky and looked entirely horrified at the sight of the full grown dragon. Finally however he was able to over come his fear and began to make his way towards the dragon.

From his perspective it looked like it was sleeping peacefully. He must not have studied Dragons though, because Ginny and Harry both knew that Swedish Short Snouts were known for playing possum. They would have warned him, but the officials had erected a large silencing charm around the stadium blocking all noise the champions. They'd also placed a visual obscurity charm up so that none of the participants could receive visual aide from anyone.

That was how the dragon was able to wait until Cedric was only twenty feet away and catch him by surprise lighting his pants on fire. Now however he had the fire out, but was stuck behind a rock as the dragon tried to burn its way through the large boulder.

Out of desperation Cedric pointed his wand towards another rock fifty meters to his right. The rock transfigured into a dog which began

barking wildly and running around in circles. The noise and movement attracted the dragons attention. It wasn't long before the dog was barbecued and the dragon was reaching in vain for the small morsel of meat.

The distraction was all Cedric needed though. With adrenaline enhanced speed he rushed under the dragons legs side stepped it's tail, grabbed the golden egg and turned to run. There was one problem though. The dragon had gotten the dog, and sat down to enjoy the meal. It's large behind was blocking the path out of the nesting area. Cedric was trapped with no cover in a dragons nest.

As this reality set in Cedric spun in a small circle desperately searching for a way out. The dragon still had its back to him and hadn't noticed him... yet. Seeing no other way, Cedric looked heavenward in a desperate plea before running straight at the dragons tail. He grabbed hold of the top and began pulling himself up. That's when the dragon flicked its tail in annoyance.

Cedric flew twenty feet into the air and about sixty feet across the rocky terrain before landing hard on the other side of the paddock. His landing was just enough to push him across the finish line allowing the dragon handlers to rush in and subdue it. It took two handlers to help him into the medical tent.

Next up was Fleur Delacour. She was trying to get past a Welsh Green. When she entered the pitch however, many people forgot about the dragon as they looked at her. She was wearing as Mrs. Weasley would say, 'indecently' short shorts. Her top was cut low and had no sleeves. Many began to wonder if she planned on seducing the dragon into giving her the egg. They were even more shocked when that's exactly what she did.

Fleur closed her eyes for a second in concentration before opening them again. They seemed to glow and a white aura enveloped her. At once every man in the audience, except for Harry, began climbing over themselves trying to get to Fleur. All the other women were forced to hold back boyfriends, classmates, and in Lily's case her husband. Even Dumbledore was visibly affected as he stood and took two labored steps towards the young French girl.

The dragon stared openly at the girl before taking a few cautious steps towards her. About a hundred meters from her it reached the

end of its chain and pulled desperately at it. Fleur seemed to have been waiting for this and opened her mouth. A beautiful voice echoed through the stadium singing and instantly every man redoubled their efforts to get to Fleur. Once again Harry looked around him in curiosity not bothered in the least by the girls performance.

The dragon stopped it's movements and listened to the song for a few seconds. Then it quickly turned back to it's nest picked out the golden egg and laid it reverently down at the farthest point its chain could reach. Fleur stopped her song and the dragon retreated back to its nest. Quickly the girl sprinted forward grabbed the egg and ran back to the finish line.

The audience was left in stunned silence as Fleur disappeared into the medical tent.

Viktor Krum was next. He had to face the Chinese Fireball. Harry's stomach sank when he realized Daniel would be facing the spike tailed dragon he and Ginny had watched. Viktor was actually the quickest and most successful Champion so far.

He sprinted out onto the field right from the start. Once he got to within casting distance of the fireball he shouted "Immobilius Maximus" Instantly a shockwave erupted from his wand temporarily petrifying everything it touched. Including the Fireball.

After that Viktor sprinted across the field grabbed the egg and retreated back to the finish line. He was on the field maybe a minute total.

A few minutes later Daniel walked confidently out onto the field. He was facing what Harry now knew was called a Hungarian Horntail.

'Harry would you be terribly insulted if I skipped his funeral?'

'Yes, who would I have to talk to if you weren't there?'

Harry and Ginny's conversation was cut short as Daniel summoned his broom. A second later he was in the air flying wildly toward the dragon. He dodged one pillar of fire then a second. Harry could see his mother several seats over was trembling in fear as she watched her son fly against a dragon.

Daniel was rocketing skyward now as the dragon lifted itself off the ground in pursuit. Daniel then dove down quickly heading straight for the nest. Before he made it though, he was engulfed in a pillar of flames. A second later a flaming blob fell out of the sky crashing into the ground and not moving.

People in the stands began screaming and Harry had to rush down the stands to help his father hold back his hysterical mother. Dozens of dragon handlers tried to rush onto the field to subdue the dragon and help Daniel. The only problem was that the charms blocking outside help were still in place.

A second later a cry of joy rang out through the stands as Daniel sprinted away from the dragons nest. His invisibility cloak was tucked under one arm and the egg was tucked under the other. He ran right by the flaming blob many thought had been him. Just as he was about to cross to a minimum safe distance from the dragon it caught sight of him.

The barbed tail whipped out catching him in the leg. The force of the blow sent him flying up into the air as blood began pouring out of the wound. Once he hit the ground he didn't move and the barriers fell allowing the dragon handlers to rush in and pull him out.

Lily, James, and Harry, followed closely by Ginny rushed towards the medical tent to check on Daniel. Inside they found a heavily bandaged Cedric and a grinning Fleur and Viktor. Then they found Daniel who Madam Pomfrey was carefully attending to. His leg had a gash running from his ankle to his kneecap. He was unconscious from the sheer pain of the wound and Madam Pomfrey was force feeding him potions as she mended the cut.

A few minutes later Dumbledore, Fairfield, Maxine, Karkaroff, and Bagman walked into the tent. The two foreign headmasters were both smiling proudly at their students. Dumbledore had a mix of disappointment and concern on his face as he passed right by Cedric and went straight to Daniel. Bagman walked to the center of the tent with Fairfield.

"Although Mr. Potter is still unconscious we think it unfair to keep the rest of you in suspense. Therefore I will be announcing the scores now. To Cedric Diggory, out of a possible fifty points you received

thirty-five. To Fleur Delacour, out of a possible fifty you received forty-eight." Bagman stopped to glare at Dumbledore, who wasn't paying any attention. "To Viktor Krum, out of fifty, you also received forty-eight." Once again he glared at Dumbledore. "To Daniel Potter, out of fifty, you received forty-two."

James opened his mouth to protest but a look from Dumbledore forced him to close it again.

"The next task is on February fourteenth. Your clues are in the eggs. I look forward to seeing you all there." With that Bagman, Fairfield, Fleur, Maxine, Krum, and Karkaroff all left the tent leaving just the Hogwarts participants.

"Why did Daniel get a forty-two Albus?" Harry idly wondered whether James was more upset by the fact that Daniel was injured or that he wasn't in first.

"I gave Daniel a ten, while the others all gave him an eight. Apparently they believed the gash on his leg was worth a reduction in points." This seemed to anger James more, but Harry tuned his family out. Instead he and Ginny subtly exited the tent. Outside they were ambushed by Ron and Hermione.

"Is Daniel in there?" Harry glared at the two, a sudden surge of protectiveness for his twin surfacing.

"Why? You want to go yell at him some more?" Ron and Hermione had the decency to look ashamed as they analyzed their shoelaces.

"No. We want to say we're sorry and beg him to forgive us." Hermione said as Ron nodded emphatically beside her. Harry rolled his eyes at the two glory hounds, and was surprised to feel a surge of agreement from Ginny at his description of her own brother.

"He inside. He's unconscious though and Madame Pomfrey is still working on him." Before either could respond Harry and Ginny were walking quickly in the direction of the castle.

A/N

I know everyone was looking forward to the Talk. I made an executive decision to move it back to the Yule Ball chapter. I think it

fits better. As many of you probably know the Giant's won. To the two or three of you who laughed at my 24-21 prediction. Well who was closer me or Brady's 48-45 prediction?

Also, some (if not all) will most likely be annoyed by Harry's niceness to Daniel and his normalness. Don't worry the old Daniel is coming back in the next chapter once he get his groupies back. He'll even explain what exactly he did in the first task.

There's no pop culture reference. Last chapters was Reginald Fairfield, a character who was in a Boy Meets World episode. "Reg! Reginald Fairfield" Cory would say in a fake British accent.

I'm almost positive i decided on a song that actually wasn't suggested by anyone here and my friend suggested it. I'm not going to dedicate to her because i'm mean like that. I will however dedicate the next chapter to whoever helps me with a problem i'm having.

As a guy, i have no fashion sense. Therefore, when it comes to describing a dress Ginny can wear to the yule ball, i'm clueless. Please help!

Thanks for all the reviews, we hit 300! (PREPARE FOR GLORY!)  
Next Chapter: The Talk/ The Yule Ball

## Chapter 12: the Yule Ball

The next morning Daniel woke up in the hospital wing, his leg was still wrapped tightly in bandages. At his bedside were both his parents, Ron and Hermione. When they realized he was awake all of them started talking at once. Daniel's head was already pounding from his potion hangover and he motioned for them to be quiet.

"One at a time please my head is killing me." He whispered quietly. Hermione nudged Ron forward and he nervously stood up.

"Listen Daniel, Hermione and I, we're really sorry. We shouldn't have abandoned you like that. We were just upset that you put your name in the cup without telling us." Daniel rolled his eyes in annoyance.

"I told you I didn't put my name in the cup!"

"Alright mate, if you say so." Ron said in a voice that clearly said 'I don't believe you, but I'm not going to argue over it.' "So, are we forgiven?"

"I don't know why I should. You abandoned me." Ron and Hermione both looked down in shame.

"Please Daniel what can we do to make it up to you. We'll do anything." Hermione pleaded. Daniel paused and his eyes unfocused as he thought about something.

"If you help me solve the next clue, I'll help you."

"Alright mate, how hard can it be." Ron said as he smiled broadly. Hermione was also smiling in relief next to him.

"So Daniel, how did you make a copy of yourself?" Hermione asked excitedly. Obviously this had been foremost on her mind after the apology.

"It's an old spell dad taught me. It's supposed to be used as a distraction in a duel. Your opponent won't know which one is real if it's done right. I cast it at the same time as I pulled my cloak on. Then I had the double ride my Firebolt, I'm going to need a new one for next season by the way dad, and then I snuck into the nest."

Hermione was nodding along with his explanation the whole time. At the end she asked one more question.

"Why did you take the cloak off?" Daniel sighed.

"I saw that the dragon had deep fried my double, and I couldn't run in the cloak without tripping. If I'd tried to move away slowly the dragon would most likely have smelled me. They have very good noses on them."

"Oh alright, that makes sense I suppose." Before anyone could say another word Madam Pomfrey marched out her office.

"Alright you four, he needs his rest so all of you get out this instant." Quickly they said their goodbyes, Lily hugging him tightly and then left the Hospital wing.

Break

"You called Lily?" Sirius said as he stepped out of the fireplace into Lily's office.

"Sirius, good. I need your help."

"Is something wrong?" Lily shook her head quickly and Sirius took a seat across from her.

"Well... you see the thing is... um... Sirius... I need you to give Harry the Talk." Sirius stared blankly at her as she blurted out her request.

"Can you say that slower?" Lily sighed in exasperation.

"I need you to give Harry the Talk." The words still didn't penetrate Sirius' thick skull.

"What talk... OH! Why me? Shouldn't James do that?" Sirius looked desperate now and was glancing around the room like he expected James to jump out and say surprise or something.

"Well, Harry and James, aren't exactly talking." This just confused Sirius even more.



"Why not?" Lily sighed in defeat and looked at Sirius with pleading eyes.

"James said some things and hasn't apologized. I don't know when he will. Harry and Ginny however are very close, and I need someone to give him the Talk. Please Sirius." She paused for a second then adopted a feral smile. "If you don't I may just have to spill the beans on your sleeping buddy." Sirius' eyes widened in horror.

"You promised you wouldn't tell!" Lily smirked evilly at him. Finally he sighed in defeat. "Fine I'll do it." Lily's face broke out in a wide smile.

"Good, because he's going to be here in two minutes. Good luck!" Before Sirius could say anything Lily had rushed out of the office and closed the door behind her. Sirius sat in silence for a few minutes before there was a knock at the door and it opened a little.

"Hey mum I go- Oh hi Sirius." Sirius smiled confidently at Harry.

"Hey pup. Um... listen your mum wanted me to have a talk with you..." Sirius paused looking for a good point to start at. "So I heard you and Ginny are finally official." Harry nodded his head as he took a seat across from Sirius. "Congratulations it took you long enough."

"Uh Thanks. I think."

"Well, now that you two are officially dating there are some er, things you should know." Harry's eyes narrowed slightly, he had a feeling he knew where this conversation was going. "Well, you see Harry when your young, you have some pretty strong er, urges to do some things. My point is you really shouldn't. At least not until Ginny's seventeen... actually with the amount of brothers she has you may want to wait until after they're dead." Harry's face began to redden as he realized what was coming.

"So, anyway your mum asked me to tell you, you know guy stuff." Sirius noticed the horrified look on Harry's face and conjured a bottle of fire whiskey, pouring each of them a glass. "Here this should make things easier." Harry took the offered glass and considered it for a moment. As he raised it to his lips he was stopped by a shout.

'Harry James Potter! Don't you dare drink that stuff!'

'Why not Gin?'

'Because I'm still in class. We don't know how alcohol will affect us through the bond. If I get drunk in the middle of class because of you, I'll kill you.'

'Ok I'm putting it down.' Harry quickly set the glass down and returned his gaze to Sirius. Sirius was looking curiously at him but shrugged and quickly downed an entire glass of fire whiskey.

"So anyway where was I... oh right. Now Harry when a man and a woman are in love..."

Twenty Minutes Later.

"So if you don't perform that charm before you, you know, the girl will most likely get pregnant. Do you understand all this?" Sirius looked up from the diagrams he had been drawing on Lily's chalk board for the first time in ten minutes. Harry was sitting at a desk his eyes wide and his face pale. His mouth was hanging open slightly as he looked at the extremely crude pictures Sirius had drawn.

"Harry?" He received no answer so he leaned forward waving a hand in front of Harry's face. "Harry!" Harry seemed to snap out of the shock he was in and his face reddened quickly.

"Yea um.. What were you saying Sirius?"

"I asked if you got all that." Harry glanced back at the pictures on the board and his face grew even redder.

"Yea, I-I got it all. But Sirius, are you sure diagram three is physically possible. I'm pretty sure a human body isn't supposed to bend that way." Sirius chuckled lightly before answering.

"Trust you just need to practice for a few years and you'll be able to do it I'm sure. Took me four years to master that one." Harry numbly shook his head before asking the question he most wanted to ask.

"Can I go now?"

"Yea I think I'm done. You've learned everything I can teach you. See you later pup." Harry was out the door almost before Sirius had finished talking.

Break

"Students! Students! Can I have your attention!" Professor Flitwicks voice squeaked from the front of the room. Everyone in the fourth year Gryffindor-Ravenclaw class turned towards where the diminutive teacher was perched on a pile of books.

"I have an announcement for all of you! This year because of the Triwizard Tournament Hogwarts will be hosting the prestigious Yule Ball! The dance will be open to all students fourth year and above," Harry was just about to raise his hand when Flitwick continued. "And any younger students may go if they are asked by an older student." Harry breathed a sigh of relief.

He pause to check on the bond and found that Ginny was too busy paying attention to her potion to notice the announcement in Harry's class. He decided that since she didn't know about it he would simply ask her the proper way, in person.

Once Charms ended Harry was one of the first people out the door as he walked quickly in Ginny's direction. From Charms to the dungeons weren't that far but one of the staircases rotated the wrong way and left Harry on the wrong side of the castle. So finally after going around the long way he found Ginny. She was cornered in a hallway by, of all people, Draco Malfoy, and his two goons. Harry paused when he realized none of them had seen him, Ginny however sensed him and silently told him to stay hidden.

"Ginerva, you're the best looking pure blood witch in the school. Therefore, I would request you attend the Yule Ball with me, my father has of course granted permission." Ginny stared blankly at Malfoy as he attempted to act every bit the aristocratic pure blood.

"Why would I go with you? I have a boyfriend." Malfoy waved his hand dismissively.

"Why would you want to go with a pathetic half blood like Potter. Going with me could lead to a betrothal. You would be married to me and be a powerful pure blood witch for once. Think of the money

and the social standing you could achieve." Ginny thought about it, for about half a millisecond.

"Draco, dear." She smiled coyly at him, as he smiled smugly back. "I wouldn't want to marry you unless the only other person on earth was Daniel Potter. Even then I think I'd rather kill myself than be stuck with either of you. I will not go to the Yule Ball with you!" Malfoy's smug smile quickly turned into a sneer.

"Stupid blood traitor whore. How dare you insult me?" Ginny arched an eyebrow.

"It's not that hard especially with your father being a sniveling submissive bitch to Voldemort." Malfoy took a step back like he'd been punched.

"You'll pay for that one Weasley!" Malfoy's hand came up to slap Ginny, but she was quicker.

In a flash Ginny's wand was out and Malfoy was screaming in pain as giant bat shaped boogies flew out of his nose. Crabbe and Goyle seeing their leader in danger menacingly moved towards Ginny. Two more flicks of her wand and Goyle was unconscious while Crabbe was stuck to a wall as his pants began to shrink, slowly.

"You alright Gin?" Harry said as he moved towards her. He took special care to step directly on Malfoy's unprotected stomach as he walked over the blonde boy.

"I'm fine. I believe you wanted to ask me something?" Harry grinned and grabbed her hand pulling her away from the scene of the fight.

As they made their way towards the Founder's room, which was the only room they were guaranteed privacy, Harry had to stare down five different boys who'd tried to approach Ginny, even with him holding her hand. That's why he was overjoyed when they reached the Founder's room and finally had some well deserved privacy.

"Ginny, I guess you know about the Ball now. I-I just wanted to know, well if you want, would you be my date to the Ball?" Ginny rolled her eyes in exasperation.

"Of course I'll go to the ball with you, who else do you think I'd go with?" Before Harry could respond, Ginny leaned forward and captured his lips with hers.

"Excuse me love birds but I believe you have some work to do." Harry and Ginny pulled apart and glared at Slytherin's portrait.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean you haven't been here in two days and you're falling behind on your sword work. So grab a sword and start sparring." Harry and Ginny continued to glare at him. "Now!" Finally sighing in defeat they both grabbed a sword and began sparring.

Break

Harry and Ginny sat at the Ravenclaw table watching the scene unfolding before them. Daniel had just marched into the hall and straight to the Ravenclaw table. Instead of going to Harry and Ginny as they'd expected he marched right past them to the Beauxbatons representatives. Specifically Fleur Delacour.

"Hi Fleur." Fleur looked up from her meal when Daniel spoke.

"Oh 'ello Daniel!" She flashed a brilliant smile at him and almost instantly every male in the Great Hall, bar Harry and Dumbledore, sighed in pleasure. It took Daniel a few seconds to recover since he'd been hit with the full blast of her smile.

"Umm... F-Fleur, I-I was wondering if y-you wanted to go to the ball with me?" Fleur seemed to be expecting this and took it all in stride.

"I'm zo zorry Daniel, Roger haz already asked me." Daniel visibly deflated as Roger Davies glared at him from across the table.

"Oh alright, I'll see you later Fleur." Without waiting for a response Daniel turned and rushed out of the hall. Following shortly behind him were Ron and Hermione.

After the first task, all of Gryffindor house had returned to steadfastly support Daniel. Ron and Hermione, from what Ginny and Harry had heard, begged Daniel for forgiveness and were only awarded it under the condition they help him solve the next clue. Neither Harry

nor Ginny had heard about anything concerning the next clue, and had pretty much forgotten it.

Break

The weekend before the Yule ball Ginny received several galleons in the mail from her parents. They were left over from two summers ago when her father had won a galleon drawing with The Daily Prophet. Due to her fathers schedule at work they'd been unable to take a vacation like they wanted to. Instead they were able to pay for Bill and Charlie to each come home for a month. At the end they'd had plenty of money left over.

So that Saturday on the last Hogsmeade weekend before the Ball, Ginny went into town to buy a nice set of dress robes. She'd been through two out of the three shops in town when she entered the third one and found her perfect dress. It was the dress. She bought it, and a pair of matching shoes then rushed back to the castle.

Break

"I don't get why they need five hours to get ready." Harry and Neville were sitting in the library playing wizards chess on the day of the Ball. Ginny and Luna had left almost an hour ago to start getting ready.

"Honestly mate, I have no idea. I think it has something to do with the hair. Since it's so long it must take awhile to wash it or something." Neville laughed quietly to himself before moving his rook forward.

"I could never be a girl. If I ever spend more then twenty minutes getting ready for anything, just kill me." Harry laughed loudly and received an angry glare from Madam Pince.

Harry and Neville were able to joke around in the library for another two hours before they finally had to make their way back to their common rooms. Once there they found almost all the other guys sitting around reading, playing chess, or staring blankly at the wall. An occasional giggle or shriek would echo down from the girls dorms. Harry took an open seat and tried to figure out what was going on through the bond.

'Oh no you don't Harry! This is a private time. You'll just have to wait.' With those words Ginny began making a conscious effort to keep him out of her mind. He could still get in easily enough but neither broke the others trust by doing that. It was an unspoken rule.

At twenty minutes to seven all the guys in the common room rose almost as one and began making their way up to the dorms. Harry took a ten minute shower, then tried to run a comb through his hair. When nothing happened he shrugged and left the comb by the sink. Next he threw on the blue dress robes with golden trim his mother had gotten him for his birthday. After that was all done he gently dabbed on some of the cologne Sirius had owled him the day before.

Once that was all done he gave himself a quick once over in the mirror. He flattened a small wrinkle in his robes then walked back down to the common room. He still had five minutes to spare before Ginny would be coming down. In the interim Harry sat in an armchair with a good view of the staircases.

He watched as girl after girl descended the stairs and met their date. Each one was pretty in their own way, but none really stood out to Harry. Finally at seven-thirty Harry felt Ginny approaching down the stairs and stood up to greet her. He managed two steps towards the staircase before his jaw dropped.

Ginny stood at the bottom of the stairs dressed in a golden dress trimmed in the same navy blue as Harry's robes. Her long red hair was tied up in an elegant bun. Long curled strands of hair fell loosely around her face framing it perfectly. She had on some make-up but not much, and Harry realized she was a few inches taller due to the heels. His mind also took note of the fact that her dress robes accentuated her growing body, but we won't get into that.

After several seconds of Harry opening and closing his mouth in awe, Ginny stepped forward looking pointedly at him.

"Do you have anything to say Harry?" This seemed to snap him out of it and he smiled widely at her.

"You look beautiful Gin. Every guy at the ball is going to be wishing they were me tonight." Ginny smiled happily at him and accepted his proffered arm. Together they left the Common room heading for the Entrance Hall where everyone was gathering.

## Break

Harry, Ginny, Neville, and Luna all stood together in a corner of the Entrance Hall. Around them dozens of other couples milled about happily. Near the door to the Great Hall the champions all stood with their dates. Daniel had ended up going with Parvarti Patil. He kept sending jealous glares at both Harry and Ginny, and Fleur and Roger. The biggest surprise so far had been Krum's date, Hermione.

Ron had come with Padma, Parvarti's sister, and he also was glaring at Roger. Draco had sulked out of the dungeons next to the hulking beast that was Pansy Parkinson. She was wearing a rather crude set of dress robes that showed off much more skin than any person in the hall wanted to see on that girl. James and Lily were already standing hand in hand with some of the other teachers opposite where the champions were.

"Attention students and guests!" Every head turned towards where Professor McGonagall stood in front of the doors to the Great Hall. "I will now be opening the doors to the Great Hall. The Champions and their dates followed by the Professors will enter first. After that the rest of you may enter in an orderly fashion." When she was met by silence she gave a brief nod and turned towards the doors to the Great Hall.

The doors opened slowly revealing the Great Hall. It had been transformed into a winter wonderland, and ice, snow, and frost clung to every surface. At the front of the hall the three headmasters, the three Ministers, Bagman and Fairfield stood on a raised platform. When the doors had opened fully the white frost that covered the floor of the Great Hall swept outwards covering the Entrance Hall and then escaping out beneath the front doors. Surprisingly the frost was not slippery and had the same amount of traction as if it were the normal floor.

"Your Honors! I present the Champions of the Triwizard Tournament." Professor McGonagall called out regally. After that she stepped aside and Viktor Krum with Hermione led the procession into the hall.

Tradition dictated that each couple would approach the judges bow and then take their assigned seats. Harry and Ginny were so far



away from the doors that they were one of the last couples to enter the hall. The second they entered however almost every eye in the hall turned towards them.

Their arms were linked and they walked with an easy grace that most associated with royalty. Neither seemed to notice the sudden attention because they were too busy glancing happily at each other as they moved forward with the line of couples. Once they reached the front Harry bowed while Ginny curtsied. After that they took their seats next to Neville and Luna. Also at their table were Seamus Finnegan, Lavender Brown, Michael Corner, and Lisa Turpin. They didn't know the others really well though.

"Thank you all!" Dumbledore's voice boomed loudly in the Hall as the last couple took their seats. "Before the dancing begins dinner shall be served. To order simply say your meal choice into the menu in front of you." Dumbledore proceeded to demonstrate and soon the Hall was filled with the voices of people ordering meals.

Break

"Can I have everyone's attention please!" The meals had just disappeared from the tables and Dumbledore had once again stood up. "In accordance with Yule Ball tradition the Champions and their dates will lead off the dancing. Now may I present the Weird Sisters!"

Dumbledore returned to his seat as the Champions led their dates onto the dance floor. The Weird Sisters started off with a slow dance. All of the couples danced gracefully except for Daniel. It appeared he hadn't danced before and he constantly stepped on poor Parvarti's toes. For her part she was able to keep her gasps of pain very quiet, but the pain on her face was clearly evident.

After a few minutes Professor McGonagall signaled to the other guests that they could now begin dancing. Instantly Harry was leading Ginny onto the dance floor. They'd been receiving somewhat awkward dancing lessons from Rowena and Helga since the Ball was announced. They were both very confident in the dancing abilities now. They quickly adopted the customary slow dancing position with Harry taking the lead.

After a few minutes the song changed and was a bit faster paced. Harry and Ginny separated accordingly and began dancing happily. The band itself played a variety of songs from their hit My Big Cauldron of Love to muggle hits like Sweet Child of Mine. The band stopped after almost two hours and the lead singer walked to the mic.

"Hey everyone! This next song is for all the couples out there! Our lead guitarist John has been practicing this for a while and is making his singing debut with it! I'll be taking over piano for this song!" The singer stepped back and as she sat down at a piano, the lead guitarist stepped up to the mic.

"This song is called Heaven, and it's by a muggle artist named Bryan Adams." Harry stepped up to Ginny and she wrapped her arms around his waist as he placed his hands on her hips. The lead singer started playing the piano as John began on the guitar.

"Oh - thinkin' about all our younger years

There was only you and me

We were young and wild and free

Now nothin' can take you away from me

We've been down that road before

But that's over now

You keep me comin' back for more"

Harry pulled Ginny closer to him as an image of her standing in the Chamber with glowing red eyes came unbidden into his mind. Ginny caught the image and laid her head on his shoulder as they swayed with the rhythm. She began pushing calming thoughts through the bond to him.

"Baby you're all that I want

When you're lyin' here in my arms

I'm findin' it hard to believe

We're in heaven

And love is all that I need

And I found it there in your heart

It isn't too hard to see

We're in heaven"

Harry and Ginny began seeing more and more of themselves in the song as they listened to the lyrics. Neither noticed the light orange aura that began to surround them. Few people actually did. Lily, Dumbledore, Snape, Moody, and McGonagall were the only ones to notice the glow forming around the young couple.

"Oh - once in your life you find someone

Who will turn your world around

Bring you up when you're feelin' down

Ya - nothin' could change what you mean to me

Oh there's lots that I could say

But just hold me now

Cause our love will light the way"

The glow slowly got brighter as the climax of the song began, but Ginny and Harry were too lost in each others eyes to notice. Lily realizing neither would want the attention they got from the aura cast a strong notice-me-not charm on the couple. That still didn't stop Dumbledore and Moody from seeing what happened next.

"N' baby you're all that I want

When you're lyin' here in my arms

I'm findin' it hard to believe

We're in heaven

And love is all that I need

And I found it there in your heart

It isn't too hard to see

We're in heaven

I've bin waitin' for so long

For something to arrive

For love to come along"

"I love you Gin." Ginny sighed contentedly as Harry said the words both of them already knew but neither had ever said before.

"I love you too Harry." Harry leaned forward and captured Ginny's lips with his as the song began to end. Neither noticed that the orange glow around them changed and became a blinding white, as their bond finally reached its highest phase.

"Now our dreams are comin' true

Through the good times and the bad

Ya - I'll be standin' there by you

N' baby you're all that I want

When you're lyin' here in my arms

I'm findin' it hard to believe

We're in heaven

And love is all that I need

And I found it there in your heart

It isn't too hard to see

We're in heaven"

As the song ended the aura around the two began to dissipate and still neither noticed, it was most likely because they were still kissing and hadn't broken apart for almost a minute. Dumbledore, Lily, and Moody were all watching the couple in awe. The couples around them noticed that suddenly they felt as if everything was going to be alright and that they were truly loved. Thanks to Lily's notice-me-not charm no one except for the three professors saw what was happening with the couple.

After another minute Harry and Ginny pulled apart but rested their foreheads against each other.

"Wow."

"Yeah. Come on Gin," Harry grabbed Ginny's hand and pulled her off the dance floor and out the front doors of the castle.

A few minutes later both of them were cuddled together under a blanket Harry had conjured for both of them. The night was crystal clear and besides the cold Harry was reminded of their first date. He glanced at his watch which was approaching eleven thirty. Realizing Christmas was almost over Harry pulled a carefully wrapped box out of his pocket.

"Merry Christmas Gin," Ginny took the present smiling broadly and reached into the small bag she had with her. She pulled out a small box and handed it to Harry.

"Merry Christmas Harry." Harry took the present then nudged Ginny to open hers first.

Ginny ripped through the silvery wrapping paper until she reached a plain black jewelry case. She opened the case and gasped at what was inside. Carefully she pulled out a beautiful golden locket on a golden chain. Opening it slowly, a small golden charm fell out of it. The charm was shaped like a lightning bolt and was made to be attached to her charm bracelet. In the locket was a picture of herself and Harry cuddled together in front of a tree. Opposite the picture were the words, HP&GW 12/94.

"Thank you Harry. It's beautiful. Now open yours!" Harry smiled and looked down at the small box from Ginny.

He opened it excruciatingly slowly, making Ginny growl in annoyance. Finally he opened the box and found out it was apparently magically enhanced. While he'd taken their budget and gotten one large present, she'd apparently gotten a bunch of small things. The first thing he pulled out was a collar with the words Property of Ginny Weasley engraved on it. Raising an eyebrow he looked questioningly at Ginny.

"We're almost done with our Animagus forms. I just want all the other girls to know that you're mine, Wolfboy." Harry smirked and placed the collar to the side.

Next he pulled out a framed picture of himself and Ginny from their first trip to Hogsmeade. They were in the Three Broomsticks and both were gazing lovingly at the other.

"Who took this?" Harry asked as Ginny laughed.

"Colin apparently did, he was just taking pictures of everything for his parents. He showed it to me and I asked for a copy." Harry nodded in understanding and continued to the last gift.

The last gift was another picture. This one was framed in an elegant silver frame. It was magical and two engraved birds, a hawk and a falcon, moved around on the frame. The picture itself was of a tree in the backyard of Potter Manor. Every few seconds a red tailed hawk and a peregrine falcon would fly out of the tree and fly around for a few minutes before returning to the tree.

"Ginny who took this?" Ginny smiled as her eyes followed the hawk around the picture.

"Your mum did one day while we were flying. She told me once that we fly better than real birds." Harry smiled and placed the picture next to the rest of the presents.

Both of them were still cuddled under the blanket and Harry pulled Ginny closer to him kissing her tenderly on the lips. Before either could deepen the kiss the clock inside the castle began to announce the arrival of midnight. Professors began to call in the remaining

students to go to bed. So, Harry and Ginny gathered their things and hand in hand returned to the Common Room.

A/N

This is going to be rushed i'm already a few minutes late for work,

First off thanks to David305 who pointed out that i accidentally changed Madame Maxime to Madame Maxine my bad.

Not much to say, next chapter hopefully by sunday. I don't dance i think it was evident in my poor description of the dancing but there you go.

Next Chapter: The Second Task

## Chapter 13: The Second Task... sort of

"I got it!" Ron and Daniel looked up as Hermione descended the stairs from the girls dormitories.

"Got what?" Ron asked between yawns. It was the morning after the Yule Ball and Ron thought he should still be asleep.

"I got Viktor to tell me how to figure out the next clue!" Daniel raised an eyebrow and looked at her questioningly.

"Do we want to know how you got that information?" Hermione smirked and got a far away look in her eye.

"I snogged him senseless. He really was a great kisser." Daniel rolled his eyes and shook his head in exasperation.

"Ok, well what is the clue?"

"All he said was open the egg under water." Daniel and Ron both gave her disbelieving looks, but finally Daniel shrugged and summoned the egg. He'd tried everything else already.

A few minutes later Daniel was pulling his head out of the nearest sink grinning widely as the water ran off his face. Hermione and Ron were looking at him hopefully as he closed the egg and pulled it out of the sink.

"I got it!"

Break

"Oh James, I'm so glad you could make it." Dumbledore said as James entered his office and sat down across from the aged headmaster.

"It wasn't that hard Headmaster. You are the reason I'm stationed at the school for the remainder of the tournament."

"Yes well, security is of the utmost importance with all the foreign delegates coming in and out of the school. I called you here for another matter though." James leaned forward in his seat motioning for the headmaster to continue. "The next task involves the



Champions rescuing a hostage from the bottom of the lake. As his father I thought you'd know who the most important person to Daniel is right now." James nodded and leaned back in his chair.

"Well... Ron's his best friend, but so is Hermione..." He was stopped by Dumbledore interrupting his thought processes.

"Ms. Granger has already been selected to be Mr. Krum's hostage. He is apparently attached to her according to Igor." James nodded and returned to his thought processes.

"If Hermione is out, I wouldn't say Parvarti, that date at the Ball last week went horribly. He's had a pretty big crush on Ginny for a few years now, I think he might be getting over it now, or at least accepting she's out of reach." Dumbledore choose that moment to interrupt him.

"Would you say he still has feelings for Ms. Weasley?"

"Yea I guess, I catch him staring at her across the hall sometimes at dinner. Last week at the Ball he was glaring daggers at Harry most of the night." Dumbledore nodded appreciatively.

"Then Ms. Weasley should do fine. All we need is for Daniel to have strong feelings towards the hostage."

"I don't think Ginny would agree to that though..."

"Oh she won't have to, the rules for the tournament clearly state any student can be used to challenge the Champions. All of the hostages will be put into a type of coma the morning of the task and taken to the bottom of the lake."

"Harry's not going to like that, and neither is Ginny when she wakes up." Dumbledore thought about it momentarily then shrugged.

"They can't do anything about it really, the law is on my side in this matter." James nodded reluctantly and stood to leave. When he reached the door he turned back.

"Harry's got a mean right hook, you may want to watch out for that." Before Dumbledore could respond James was gone and door had closed sharply behind him.

Break

The door to Lily's office opened slowly as first Harry then Ginny stuck their heads in. Lily was seated calmly behind her desk looking at them expectantly.

"You asked to see us mum?" Lily smiled and ushered them to two chairs across from her.

"I was just wondering how far you got in your soul bond book." Harry and Ginny looked at her questioningly before Ginny answered.

"We both finished it. Why?" Lily smiled in relief.

"I was just wondering if you know what a white aura around two soul mates means."

"A white aura is the highest level of a soul bond. The aura changes in color as the bond gets stronger, it starts at a dark purple almost black and then progresses through the color spectrum until it reaches white." Harry answered reading the entry right from his memory of the book. "Why?"

"At the Ball, you and Ginny were giving off a visible white aura while you were dancing. I'm surprised you didn't notice it." Harry and Ginny's mouths both fell open as they looked at Lily in shock.

"T-That's impossible." Lily looked at Ginny in confusion.

"Why is it impossible?"

"Because it takes years for a bonded couple to reach that level... Only four other couples in history have ever reached it and it took almost twenty to thirty years for them." Lily's eyes widened in surprise, before she asked the question she had been wondering about for a while.

"So what does it mean?" Harry and Ginny glanced side ways at each other nervously before returning their attention to Lily.

"No one really knows," Harry started.

"The couples that did reach this level," Ginny continued in perfect synchronization.

"Never really talked about it to other people,"

"There's only two definite things known about it."

"Our magic will most likely be stronger and we can call on each others magic in emergencies."

"And our souls are officially one... where one goes, the other follows." Lily was watching the two of them, with her mouth hanging open and it took her a second to comprehend what they had said.

"What do you mean where one goes the other follows?" Harry and Ginny both looked down at the floor for a few seconds before finally Harry looked up.

"If either of us were to um... die... the other wouldn't live for more than a few hours..." Lily's eyes widened in surprise as her lips formed a perfect O shape.

"Oh... well... Am I correct in guessing that if one of you died the other wouldn't want to live anyway." Ginny and Harry instinctively grabbed the others hand, finally Ginny spoke.

"Neither of us could imagine life without the other. I'd be broken without Harry..." Lily smiled kindly at the young girl and patted her gently on the knee.

"I guess we'll just have to make sure nothing bad happens to either of you." Harry and Ginny smiled thankfully at her. "Well that's all I really wanted to know, but I ask if you find out anything else important about this new part of the bond, you come and tell me about it." When she received two nods she hugged and kissed both on the cheek. "I'll see you at dinner then."

Break

"Come on you two concentrate, you're so close!" Rowena yelled as Harry and Ginny sat partially transformed on the floor in front of her portrait.

Harry's arms and legs were shaped like a wolfs and covered in black fur. His torso was wide at the shoulders and got narrower as it went down until it ended in a bushy black tail. His head was the only remaining part that was still human. Ginny was sitting next to him a similar predicament. Her arms and legs were covered in orange and white fur and shaped like a tigers. Her torso was covered in white fur with a mix of orange and she also had a lithe orange tail. Her head however was still human, though her long mane of hair seemed to be blending and melting into the fur on her back.

"You can do it! Come on!" Sal and Godric joined in on the cheering. Soon enough there was a vicious howl as Harry's head finished the transformation.

Seeing Harry finish his transformation seemed to motivate Ginny. Five minutes later an agile Siberian Tiger and powerful unknown species of wolf were wrestling on the floor in the center of the Founder's Room. After Ginny had successfully pinned Harry they transformed back to their human forms and Harry rolled Ginny over so she was under him, before locking his lips with hers. The Founders let this continue for a minute or two but when Harry's hands began to wander towards inappropriate places Helga decided it was enough.

"Stop right there mister! You two will not be doing that stuff in front of us!" Harry and Ginny rolled apart from each other and scowled at the Founder. "Now I want you two to practice your transformation. I don't want you leaving here until you can do that one in your sleep!"

Grumbling Harry and Ginny returned to their task and began transforming first to their animal form then back to human and then repeating the process. Each time the transformation happened a little faster. When the two finally left the Founder's Room later that night they could both do it in under two seconds.

Break

February 14th dawned like any other day for Harry and Ginny. This day was a little special, it was after all their first official Valentines day as a couple. The fact that the Second Task also happened to be that day didn't seem that important. Harry started the day off nicely by greeting Ginny in the common room with a single red rose and a kiss on the cheek.

Hand in hand they made their way down to the Great Hall for breakfast. The hall was of course buzzing with students who were excited to see what the Second Task would be. All of the Judges and the assorted Headmasters/mistresses, were seated at the Head table. If Harry hadn't been so focused on Ginny today, he might have noticed how the Headmaster and James were both staring fixedly at them. Unfortunately (or fortunately if you like violence) Harry didn't notice.

They'd been sitting together eating quietly for several minutes discussing their plans for the day. Neither had any interest in attending the Second Task, and had instead decided to check the weather outside and see if a picnic would work out or not. Then Ginny took her first sip of Pumpkin juice.

"Harry, does the pump-" Harry had a split second to wonder why the bond between himself and Ginny had diminished so much before Ginny's head landed on his shoulder. Surprised Harry turned towards her which caused her to fall sideways into his arms.

"Ginny! Ginny!" When he received no response he shook her slightly before pulling out his wand. If he hadn't been so distracted by his own panic he might have noticed similar situations happening at the Gryffindor table and twice more at the Ravenclaw table.

"Enervate! Enervate!" When that spell didn't work Harry focused all his energy through the bond pleading with Ginny to wake up. Before he could finish though, Dumbledore, James, Lily, Flitwick, and Bagman had walked up behind Harry.

"Mr. Potter, we are going to have to take Ms. Weasley. She is part of the Second Task and will need to be placed in her proper spot." Dumbledore said all this calmly, but Harry's head snapped up to glare murderously at the Headmaster. The other teachers along with Bagman and James took an involuntary step backwards.

"You did this to her! Wake her up this instant! She didn't volunteer for this!" At Harry's words Lily and Flitwick turned towards the Headmaster anger clearly written on their faces.

"You said all the of the hostages had volunteered!" Lily shrieked at the Headmaster. Flitwick nodded vehemently next to her.

"Technically they did. Simply by attending school this year all students were volunteered to be part of any task should the need arise. Isn't that correct Mr. Bagman?" Bagman looked cautiously at the still seething Harry, Lily, and Flitwick before nodding sheepishly.

"Yes, in the rules it clearly states that any student or faculty member may be used to challenge or encourage a Champion. In this case the hostages are meant to encourage the Champion into completing the Task in the allotted time."

"Hostage is a good word, you're both assaulting a student and kidnapping her. I won't allow it!"

"I'm afraid you have no choice in the matter Mr. Potter. Ms. Weasley is in a magical coma and I am the only one who knows how to revive her." Harry gently laid Ginny on the bench and stood up between her and the Headmaster.

"You'll have to go through me to get her then." Harry's voice was barely above a whisper but everyone around him heard it clearly. Dumbledore's eyebrows raised in surprise at the open challenge from the young student. Lily looked cautiously between her son and the Headmaster before stepping up next to him.

"I can't in good conscious allow this Headmaster. I'm with Harry." This seemed to surprise Dumbledore even further, and stirred into action by Lily's words Flitwick and then Neville(who had walked over when seeing his friends in trouble) and Luna all moved to stand next to Harry. Before Dumbledore could say anything though Mr. Fairfield walked up having seen the boiling conflict.

"All of you are challenging the Law right now! I can have all of you arrested!" Dumbledore nodded slightly beside him. The threat of being arrested caused Flitwick to look nervously between the rest of the group. Harry saw this out of the corner of his eye and without breaking his gaze from Dumbledore said.

"You can go Professor Flitwick I don't want you getting in trouble for me." Flitwick still looked torn but finally moved to the side of the group although he still glared loathingly at Dumbledore. "You can't have her." Dumbledore sighed and look to James who was standing nervously behind him.

"Auror Potter, I have to ask you to deter these four until after the Task." All eyes instantly turned to James who had immediately gone pale and was looking in shocked horror between Lily and Dumbledore. Finally looking directly at Lily he addressed Dumbledore.

"I'm sorry Headmaster I-I can't." Dumbledore nodded regretfully.

"I understand James." Dumbledore's wand appeared in his hand as he turned back towards Harry. He was shocked when he found Harry's wand already aimed at his chest. Lily looked from her son and Dumbledore in horror and for some reason felt worse for Dumbledore, knowing Harry wouldn't back down in anyway where Ginny was concerned.

"Please Albus just pick someone else who's willing to be the hostage." Lily pleaded, but unfortunately Dumbledore turned an apologetic frown towards her.

"I'm sorry Lily there is no time left to make the appropriate potion." He paused to let it sink in then without even turning, "Stupefy!"

The red spell streaked out of the Headmasters wand heading straight towards Harry's chest. Immediately regretting the decision Harry silently flicked his wand erecting a shield between the Headmaster and himself. He wasn't sure whether people were more shocked that he'd created the shield silently or that he'd done it in about one second.

Dumbledore's eyes narrowed slightly as he watched Harry carefully through the shield. Harry glared right back at the Headmaster. Silently Dumbledore sent two more powerful stunners towards Harry's shield. Once again the stunners were deflected into the ground. Although not outwardly visible the frustration within the Headmaster was beginning to rise as he failed once again to penetrate the shield.

"Mr. Potter you are already facing suspension I demand you lower this shield instantly before I am forced to expel you!" By this point the entire Hall was looking in awe at the confrontation. Harry glared at the Headmaster for another second before turning back to Ginny.

With a blinding burst of white light Harry pushed all his magic through the bond willing Ginny to wake up. The light faded, though it left those within a few feet of Harry momentarily blinded. When Dumbledore finally recovered his eyesight he was stunned beyond words. Harry was kneeling next to Ginny who was sitting up on the bench wiping the sleep from her eyes. Seeing that the shield was gone Dumbledore brought his wand up to stun Harry.

Harry's back was turned but Ginny's wasn't she saw the stunner coming and grabbed Harry's hand in an attempt to pull him out of its path. When their hands connected a golden sphere popped into existence around them. Dumbledore was so shocked by the appearance of the shield sphere he failed to notice as his stunner was deflected back into his chest.

The entire hall looked on in stunned silence as Dumbledore fell to the ground unconscious and the golden sphere faded from Harry and Ginny.

"Harry what just happened?"

Break

Thirty minutes later, Harry, Ginny, their parents, Dumbledore, Flitwick, and the ministry officials all sat in Dumbledore's office. Molly and Arthur were entirely bewildered as to why they were there. Dumbledore had an ice pack magically stuck to his head where he had hit it when he fell. Everyone else was either glaring at Harry or sitting near him in a show of support.

"Mr. Potter I'm afraid I will have to suspend you from Hogwarts for at least a month. Thanks to your stunt this morning we have had to delay the Second Task almost a week and the Champions have gained knowledge as to what the task will involve." Harry nodded taking the punishment he knew was coming, Ginny however would have none of it.

"That's bull-"

"Ginny!"

"Sorry mum. As I was saying that's insane all Harry was doing was protecting me from you crazy people. I should floo the aurors



demanding they arrest all of you. You poisoned me and then tried to kidnap me!" Molly and Arthur who up to that point had no idea why they were there immediately turned towards the Headmaster and the ministry officials.

"YOU DID WHAT!" All three men on the receiving end of Molly's wrath cringed and sank down in their seats slightly.

"I assure you Molly what we did was totally within the rules of the Tournament."

"WHAT EXACTLY DID YOU DO?" Bagman and Fairfield both looked sheepishly down at their shoes, while Dumbledore cleared his throat quietly.

"We simply placed Ms. Weasley into a magical coma so that she could play the role of Mr. Potter's hostage safely."

"And how would her being in a coma allow her to play the hostage safely?" Dumbledore frowned knowing the answer wouldn't redeem him anything.

"She would have been placed at the bottom of the lake with the other hostages where the Champions would have had to rescue them." Molly's eyes narrowed slowly as her face grew redder. Ginny and Arthur who both knew what this meant subtly scooted their chairs away from her.

"HOW DARE YOU! That is more irresponsible, underhanded, and immoral than anything I thought you possible of Albus!..." The screaming continued from there getting progressively louder until Harry and Ginny were convinced that the entire castle could hear her clearly. After almost ten minutes of this she turned to Harry who immediately tried to move behind Ginny.

'Coward.'

'She's less likely to kill me if I'm behind her only daughter.' Ginny snickered quietly, and both watched as Molly's face returned to its normal color and she smiled at Harry.

"Thank you Harry-dear for keeping Ginny away from these horrible people." Molly pulled Harry into a bone crushing hug, before

releasing him to fall back into his chair. Once Molly was done she turned back to Dumbledore glaring threateningly.

"Under no circumstances is my daughter to be part of this Tournament without both my consent and hers. Is that understood Albus?" Dumbledore seeing he was defeated nodded tiredly. "Good." Dumbledore waited until the Weasley matron had retaken her seat before turning back to the Potters.

"Since the entire Potter family is currently residing at Hogwarts and Harry needs to leave the grounds for his suspension I believe he should go to the closest living relatives." Before Dumbledore could continue Lily was out of her seat. Her feet were squared and her hands rested threateningly on her hips.

"No! I will not have my son staying with that horrid sister of mine. Besides she'd never agree to such a thing. If Harry must leave the school he'll be staying with Sirius."

"Lily, I'm afraid school policy dictates that in the event that normal guardians are unable to fulfill their duties, the student must go to the closest living blood relatives." Dumbledore was beginning to let his normal calm façade slip and his frustration could be heard in his voice.

"No. If Harry can't go to Sirius, then I quit. Harry and I will be leaving now." Dumbledore's mouth fell open in shock at Lily's ultimatum.

"Lily you cannot quit we're in the middle of the school year! I'd never be able to find a replacement now." Lily's eyes narrowed and she stepped closer to Dumbledore lowering her voice to a deadly whisper.

"I made a mistake once, one which I'm still trying to make up for. If it comes down to my job or my family there is no choice to be made, my family will always come first." Dumbledore sighed once again realizing he'd lost another battle. Something he'd been doing a lot of today.

"Fine Harry may remain in the school, but he is to remain in your quarters and is not allowed out under any circumstances. No students, not even Ms. Weasley may visit him." Lily turned slightly to

glance at Harry who nodded subtly before returning her gaze to the Headmaster.

"Fine. Molly, Arthur would you care to join me in my office for some tea." Subtly she motioned for Harry and Ginny to leave the office in front of her. Molly and Arthur picked up on the motion and accepted the offer before following her out.

Break

Albus Dumbledore sat quietly in his office. The day he'd had weighed heavily on him. Too many things had happened that did not bode well for him. When challenged Harry Potter had openly defied him. To make matters worse, two teachers and several students had backed him. His occlumency had also alerted him to the general feelings of most people in the hall. Most had been sympathetic towards Harry and enjoyed watching the Headmaster embarrass himself.

If the majority of the school turned against him on such a trivial matter as the Second Task, what would happen when the next war broke out. Harry Potter had once again proved himself to have the potential of being a great wizard. Dumbledore was no longer afraid of him going dark, not with a soul bond as powerful as the one between Harry and Ginny.

However, if Harry decided to not accept Dumbledore's leadership in the next war, and branch out on his own. He would be able to pull a strong following to himself. Something which simply couldn't be allowed.

Hopefully the month of solitude would work in breaking down Harry's social connections. After that Dumbledore would make sure to have Harry realize that he truly was a great leader who should be listened to. If he could bring Harry under his sway, the rest would follow.

Break

Lily, Harry, Ginny, Molly, and Arthur arrived at Lily's office and took seats around her desk. Harry and Ginny transfigured two chairs into a love seat allowing them to sit as close as possible with their parents in the room. Lily looked sadly at the two of them, she could only guess at how hard a month apart would be for them.

"This is unbelievable! How could Albus punish Harry for something like this?" Molly appeared ready to go into a full rant but Harry cut her off.

"It's understandable Mrs. Weasley. I challenged his authority, and I'm pretty sure most people would say I won. He had to punish me to make sure his image of power was preserved." Molly looked at Harry in surprise at his unexpected maturity. "I guess I should just be lucky he didn't expel me." Ginny snorted in a very unlady like way which gained a disapproving look from Mrs. Weasley.

"Even if he had I would have left too."

"Oh no you would not young lady!" Lily held up a hand causing Molly to halt her approaching rant.

"Molly I don't believe there would be anything we could really do to stop these two if they set their minds to it. Harry blocked several of Albus' stunners and then Ginny and he managed to create some sort of shield that deflected the headmasters own stunner back at him. They are much more powerful than any of us ever will be." Molly and Arthur both looked at their daughter with a mix of pride and awe.

"Either way the Headmaster had no right to attack our daughter. Thank you Harry for showing that you can protect her even when I cannot." Arthur leaned over as he spoke and grasped Harry's shoulder respectfully while looking him straight in the eye. Harry nodded and Arthur pulled his hand back looking at Harry with newfound respect.

"Well, I also believe the punishment was unfair. So we need to find a way for Harry and Ginny to see each other. Ginny I hope you won't mind some extra detentions." Lily smiled at the relieved smiles that took residence on both Harry's and Ginny's faces. "I think Harry and I should go before the Headmaster finds a reason to prolong Harry's punishment."

Lily quickly ushered Molly and Arthur out of the room leaving Harry and Ginny momentarily alone. Once their parents were out of sight Harry pulled Ginny into a loving embrace. Before either were sure what was happening their lips were locked together. Sooner than

they would have liked Lily was knocking on the door loudly warning them they had little time.

'At least we'll still be able to talk, even if we can't see each other as much as we like.' Harry nodded sadly in agreement and gripped Ginny's hand desperately as they slowly left the office. Unfortunately Lily's quarters were only a short way down the hall from her office.

'It'll be over sooner than you think love. At least it's not like first year again.' Ginny pulled Harry in for another desperate kiss before they split apart and Harry entered his parents quarters.

A/N

Sorry i didn't update technically on sunday, it almost 1am near me. I would have had this up hours ago except the power in my neighborhood decided to shut off. then i had work about ten minutes after the power came back on.

Besides that, 400 reviews!

No pop culture reference, i was too tired.

If you're wondering i have no idea when the next chapter will be up, this whole political intrigue stuff is hard. Dumbledore manipulates harry, harry manipulates dumbledore, voldermort kind of sits in the background twiddling his thumbs, oh and fudge might finally be showing up. It's all very confusing for me to write.

Next Chapter: Solitude/ The actual not very exciting mostly cannonish Second Task/Set up for the Third Task

## Chapter 14: Solitude

Five days had passed since Harry began his punishment. During those five days Harry had been unable to leave his room once. Dumbledore kept a rotating block of teachers watching the room at all times. So Harry had spent most of the day sitting in his room calmly meditating and focusing all of his attention on his final Animagus form. He'd progressed quickly and could already form a wing. This form seemed a little easier than the last two had been and he hoped he would finish before summer.

Lily, Harry, and Ginny had also spent a lot of time trying to figure out how to get Ginny and Harry some time alone. So far none of their plans had seemed feasible. Harry and Ginny were of course talking to each other constantly throughout most of the day. The physical separation was actually doing well to reaffirm their emotional and mental relationships, but both still missed the physical contact a lot.

As word spread that Harry had been suspended some male members of the school took it upon themselves to hit on Ginny whenever possible. So far she'd had to hex Michael Corner, slapped John Butler (a boy in her year who got too hands on), and kneed Malfoy in the groin when he once again tried to convince her to go on a date with him. Harry had spent those times pacing back and forth in his parents quarters like a caged animal, desperate to get out and wreck vengeance for his girlfriend.

There'd only been one real high point for Harry's punishment and that had come early on the second day. Lily had returned to her quarters after breakfast before her first class to drop off a copy of that day's Daily Prophet. Once she'd left Harry had open to the front page to find a very entertaining article.

### Student Assault!

The proceedings of the illustrious Tri-wizard Tournament were disrupted Tuesday, when Judges and Ministry officials were forced to postpone The Second Task. The reason for this postponement was due to a small rebellion lead by Harry Potter, brother to the boy-who-lived. Messer's. Bagman and Fairfield for the British Ministry of Magic were on site and Mr. Fairfield provided the paper with what happened.

"Mr. Potter refused to allow his girlfriend, a Ms. Ginerva Weasley, to hold the honor of being a Hostage that the Champion would have to rescue. He delayed the proceedings long enough that the potion meant to keep Ms. Weasley unconscious and thus safe during the actual task wore off before the task could even begin."

This is the Ministry's official position on what happened. However, Rita Skeeter, special correspondent for this paper, uncovered evidence as to what many would consider a scandal. I had the chance to interview Ms. Skeeter on what has been confirmed to be the truth of this story.

"Mr. Potter was in fact protecting his girlfriend," Skeeter began. "She was unknowingly drugged and placed into a magical coma. When the judges came to take her against her will to participate in the Task, Mr. Potter refused to let them take her. The potion which placed her in a magical coma was slipped into her drink. This also occurred to two other students at Hogwarts and the sister of Ms. Delacour."

"Also my sources confirm that the potion was given to the students without the consent of either their parents or themselves."

Mr. Arthur Weasley, Ms. Weasley's father, answered some of my questions on his way to his office earlier today. When asked if he or his wife had given consent to use this potion on his daughter Mr. Weasley had this to say.

"Neither my wife nor myself were even aware that Professor Dumbledore was giving this potion to our daughter. We were not informed until we were called to his office after the event. I never thought Albus could do such an immoral thing, it shocked me when I learned of it."

When questioned Ministry Officials all cite Laws that state any student of the school currently hosting the Tri-wizard Tournament may be used to challenge or encourage the Champions. They claim that what they did was within the law and no one performed anything illegal.

Even so this reporter has to wonder how many laws limit parents' control over their children's lives while they are away at school?

-Ima Writter

Harry had thoroughly enjoyed the Ministry and Dumbledore being caught in their own lies. If not for the mere fact that he couldn't do anything in retaliation for what they'd tried to do.

Break

Harry was once again stuck in his room during the Second Task. The only difference was that Ginny had also skipped the task and under the supervision of Professor Sprout sat outside the door to the Potters quarters. So for almost two hours the only thing separating them had been a relatively thin door. This had ended however when the students began returning from the task.

Lily and James had both returned smiling widely. Daniel had apparently been the first to return with his hostage, who ended up being Ron. Cedric and Cho had returned a few minutes later, while Viktor and Hermione returned almost an hour late and Fleur never even managed to rescue her hostage. Now all the champions were practically tied up going into the final event.

Break

Finally ten days into the punishment Harry, Ginny, and Lily figured out a way for Harry and Ginny to see each other. After classes ended that day Ginny attended her detention for once again hexing a boy. Once there Lily closed the door and Ginny transformed into her falcon form. Once the classroom window was open she soared out.

Harry opened the window to his parents quarters and watched happily as Ginny banked and flew straight at him. Before she'd even passed through the window she was transforming back to herself. This resulted in Ginny colliding with Harry and sending them both rolling onto the floor, laughing the entire way.

The two of them lay on top of each other for a few minutes just enjoying the feeling of finally being in physical contact again. Overcome with joy Harry began placing light, quick kisses on every inch of Ginny's face he could reach. This caused Ginny to giggle and try to push him off of her.



'Get off you're crushing me!'

'No, you're not allowed out of my sight from now on.'

'Harry I'm going to have to leave soon and I don't think we should waste all our time wrestling.'

'Like I said, I'm not letting you leave, you're stuck here now.'

'As good as that idea sounds you know we can't.' Ginny said mentally conveying her sadness at the idea. 'Why don't you show me around your prison?' Harry smiled lovingly at her then rolled off to the side allowing her to stand up.

Harry led Ginny around showing her the small bedroom, the living room, and the even smaller kitchen area. Once Ginny realized that that was truly it, she led Harry back to the couch in the living room. For the next twenty minutes she proceeded to snog him senseless. When they finally pulled apart Harry had a dazed smile on. When he realized that Ginny had pulled away he looked at her questioningly. She glanced obviously at the clock and then the window. Harry took the hint.

'I'll see you soon love.' Harry said as he pulled Ginny into a loving farewell kiss trying to convey all his love for her through the kiss.

'Bye Harry,' Ginny transformed into her Falcon form and regretfully flew out of the window and back to Lily's office.

Break

"Lily may I have a word with you?" Dumbledore said as he fell into step beside Lily. Lily guardedly nodded her head watching the headmaster carefully. "I've noticed Ms. Weasley receiving quite a few detentions from you over the last few weeks. I was wondering if there was any sort of problem I should be made aware of." Lily glared at the old man. He knew exactly why Ginny had been receiving extra detentions, he would just never admit it.

"Ginny and I have been having some minor disagreements in class that's all." Dumbledore nodded his head wisely.

"Well, if I see this pattern continuing I will have to address the problem and enact stricter punishments on Ms. Weasley." Lily openly glared at the man next to her and nodded in assent before turning and making her way back to her office.

Break

"Ginny I can't give you anymore fake detentions." Lily watched the girls face fall and knew that Harry must be doing something similar in her quarters.

"Why not?"

"Dumbledore's figured it out. He says if you continue to have detentions he will have to enforce stricter punishments. I think he means he'll suspend you."

Ginny slammed her fist onto her desk in frustration. Lily was only mildly surprised when the desk cracked and buckled under the strain. She guessed Ginny's frustration was causing the accidental magic and hoped her quarters would still be in one piece when she returned. Reaching out she placed a comforting hand on Ginny's shoulder.

"Don't worry we'll figure something else out. If not it's only fifteen more days, it can't be that bad." Ginny looked up at Lily, tears of frustration clearly visible in her eyes.

"You don't understand. Being apart for this long is torture! It's like there's a part of me missing!" Ginny screamed in frustration and several trinkets and pieces of furniture cracked and in some cases exploded. Ginny looked at the damaged property and muttered an dull 'Sorry'

"Don't worry about it Ginny. I promise you we'll find a way for you to be together again soon." Ginny nodded sullenly and without another word left Lily's office, her eyes never leaving the ground.

Break

Another four days passed and Lily watched helplessly as both Harry and Ginny sank further and further into depression. Neville and Luna did all they could to help Ginny, but didn't fully understand what was

wrong with her. Lily spent all her free time in her quarters trying to keep Harry happy. Unfortunately he seemed to refuse to move from his spot on the couch staring hopelessly at the ceiling.

On the twentieth day both Harry and Ginny refused to leave their beds. Lily finally realized that the bond might be causing them to get depressed and sick without each other. She found the book on bonds in Harry's trunk and spent nearly two hours reading through it.

Near the end she finally reached a passage on the separation of a bonded pair.

... The highest level pair to ever be purposefully separated was an orange level pair. They lasted just over one month of separation before becoming violently sick and sinking into a state of depression. It is theorized that should this ever occur to a White level pair they would never last more than a week perhaps two before experiencing the symptoms.

Should a bonded pair ever enter a state of depression due to separation they should be brought back together as quickly as possible. Failure to do so may result in both sinking into a magical coma, and even death.

Lily stopped reading there and throwing the book aside rushed into Harry's room. He was still awake but stared at the ceiling barely even acknowledging her presence. Urgently she grabbed his arm and pulled him up off the bed.

"Where are we going?" Harry's voice was dead and held no emotion as he looked blankly at his mother who was pulling him towards the door to the room.

"To see Ginny, now come on!" A spark immediately returned to Harry's eyes and he looked at his mother in a mix of relief and hope.

"Really? What about Dumbledore?"

"Don't worry about him. I'll handle it, just tell Ginny to meet us as soon as she can." Harry smiled happily as he followed his mother out the door to their quarters.

"She's already on her way."

"Good." Before they reached the end of the hall though Professor Snape stepped out from behind a suit of armor.

"I'm sorry Lily, I can't allow Harry out into the main school. Headmaster's orders." Lily looked pointedly at Snape before talking.

"Move Severus, Harry and I need to pass." Snape looked torn slightly but still remained fixed in the middle of their path.

"I'm sorry Lily. I can't Dumbledore's orders." Lily looked at Snape in frustration but before she could say anything else she felt the air around her warm up.

"Move now!" Lily and Snape both turned to Harry who was glowing a bright white and looking past Snape in what could only be described as pure ecstasy. Lily and Snape followed his gaze and found Ginny standing ten feet down the hall surrounded by the same white glow.

"I highly suggest you move Sev." Lily whispered as the Ginny moved closer towards them and the glow around the two intensified. Snape for his part nodded hesitantly and backed up against the wall. Once he was gone Harry and Ginny sprinted towards one another.

Ginny leaped happily into Harry's arms, her lips immediately finding his. The second they touched a shock wave shot through the castle. It felt like an earthquake and many students began looking around nervously while the teachers tried to determine it's origins. The glow around them was now blinding and both Lily and Snape had to look away.

Five minutes later the glow was still just as bright and no one could see what was happening to the two teens. Dumbledore and McGonagall had arrived and were now standing dumbstruck with Lily and Snape. Occasionally one of them would try in vain to look at the couple, but it was like attempting to look at the sun.

Dumbledore finally grew impatient of waiting and stupidly shot a few stunners towards the center of the glow. The aura immediately became solid and turned a metallic gold color. The stunners bounced harmlessly off the shield and crashed into the ground. Once the stunners had disappeared the shield dropped revealing Harry and Ginny hand in hand glaring at Dumbledore.

"Mr. Potter you must return to your quarters immediately! If you return now I won't add more time to your suspension." Lily stepped between Dumbledore and the couple, glaring menacingly at the Headmaster the entire time.

"Harry will return to our quarters but Ginny will be coming with us." Dumbledore's eyebrows furrowed slightly but this was the only outward sign of annoyance he made.

"Absolutely not Harry's punishment clearly stated he would have no contact with any of the students." Lily smiled as if she knew something the Headmaster didn't.

"Unfortunately the head nurse of the school may intercede in any affairs should the health of any student be put in jeopardy." Dumbledore now looked a little confused.

"No students health is in jeopardy therefore-" Lily cut him off holding up the bond book she'd taken with her.

"If Harry and Ginny stay separated too long they will become sick, I will not allow it. Ginny will be allowed to visit Harry for the remainder of the punishment, which shall remain ten days." Dumbledore opened and closed his mouth wordlessly unable to understand why Lily was openly challenging him.

"Fine. Ms. Weasley is the only student allowed to visit Harry. However, she may only visit between dinner and curfew. That's it." Lily nodded grudgingly and quickly ushered Harry and Ginny past the headmaster and into her quarters.

Break

With the almost constant visits from Ginny the remaining ten days of his suspension passed in what felt like the blink of an eye. Before he knew it he was sitting next to Neville in Charms listening to Professor Flitwick explain the charm to make a bag bottomless.

Break

"Nice try Cedric, but it looks like I won!" Daniel was reaching towards the Tri-wizard cup while looking back over his shoulder at Cedric who was pinned under a giant spider.

Flash

"Blood of the enemy forcibly taken..."

Flash

"Ha! You! Beat me! That's laughable. You never defeated me. You're brother though, he is truly powerful. If only my servants hadn't been so incompetent..."

Flash

"Kill it! Kill it quickly!"

Flash

Harry and Ginny simultaneously sat straight up in bed gasping for air. Neither were sure what exactly had just happened, but already it was fading quickly. Exhaustion overtook them again quickly and as Harry fell back into a fitful sleep he could only vaguely remember an image of Daniel tied to a gravestone and a high pitched voice laughing.

Break

The next morning, April 12th, Harry and Ginny both woke up feeling very refreshed. They made it all the way to the Great Hall before Harry saw his brother. Upon seeing him the image of Daniel tied to a gravestone flashed through his mind.

'Ginny do you remember that dream?'

'A little, mostly what you remember, but I think I saw Cedric fighting a spider.'

'Do you think it was real?'

'I don't know Harry. Maybe.'

Harry nodded and returned his attention back to his plate. As he and Ginny were finishing their meal a school owl landed between them a letter addressed to both of them clutched in its beak. Harry cautiously took the letter from the bird and slit it open. Inside was a short note for both of them, unfortunately it was from the Headmaster.

Dear Harry and Ginny,

I would like to offer the two of you lessons. You both show outstanding power, most likely due to your bond. Please come to my office at four o'clock today.

Albus Dumbledore

P.S. I happen to enjoy Snickers.

Harry and Ginny looked at each other in horror and then turned together to glare at the Headmaster. He returned the gaze smiling kindly his eyes twinkling merrily. Harry sighed and made sure to crumple the letter so that Dumbledore could see.

'I'm not going.'

'Good I wasn't going either.'

Break

Harry and Ginny sat silently together in the Ravenclaw common room. To an outward observer it would appear that they were asleep. In reality both were in a deep meditative state. They're using their ability to sense auras to watch Dumbledore's aura pace back and forth in what they guessed was his office. Finally he paused and a green aura flared to life, a second later a similar aura flared to life in Professor Flitwick's office.

A minute later and the green auras faded. Then they watched Professor Flitwick leave his office and head for the common room. They rose from their meditative state and watched the statue that led into the common room. A second later the diminutive professor entered the common room and started visibly to find both students staring emotionlessly at him.

"Mr. Potter, Ms. Weasley your presence is requested in the Headmasters office." Harry and Ginny nodded knowing there was no way to fight this.

Break

A few minutes later the two entered the office and took seats across from the Headmaster. He smiled benignly at them the twinkle in his eyes only slightly dimmed by the total lack of emotion coming from the two.

"Lemon drop?" When he received no answer he put the bowl down and once again smiled at the two across from him. "I know we got off to the wrong start. I was hoping I could make amends for my past over reactions by offering to provide some extra training for you two. I've noticed you sometimes have trouble controlling your powers."

"We're fine Headmaster, we don't need any help. Can we go now?" Whatever he'd expected it was apparently not this. As Harry finished speaking he and Ginny rose simultaneously and began moving towards the door.

"Wait! I'm sure I can offer you some training. I'm quite an expert in transfiguration. Have either of you ever considered becoming an Animagus?" Harry paused his hand on the doorknob.

"Yes we have." Before Dumbledore could say anything Harry and Ginny were out the door.

"Bothersome teenagers..."

Break

'Harry I did it!' Harry smiled proudly at Ginny who was now sporting two wings instead of arms.

They'd been working tirelessly on their phoenix transformations for the past few weeks. Thanks to his suspension Harry was almost finished with his. He could transform his arms and legs and shrink his torso a little. He hoped to be finished by summer.

Maybe even earlier if he tried hard enough.



## Break

The stadium was packed. Hundreds of students, ministry officials, reporters, and parents were filling the Hogwarts Quidditch Stadium like it had never been filled before. Standing room only did not even begin to describe it.

The normally flat field had been transformed into a twenty feet high hedge maze. Harry and Ginny sat with his parents and watched intently as Daniel stood with the other champions and all the officials outside the entrance to the maze.

All three Ministers were in attendance and talking pompously to their Champions. Bagman and Fairfield stood to the side going over some last minute rules with the assembled Professors and Aurors who would be patrolling the maze. The three Headmasters were finalizing the joke bets they had. Whichever schools lost would have to give a years supply of their house elves finest meals to the other school.

Finally Bagman took the microphone and began his pre task announcements.

"Welcome to the Third and Final Task of the Tri-Wizard Tournament!" The crowd erupted in cheers. "Originally it had been planned that the contestants would enter based on who had the point lead. Amazingly enough however, after two tasks Viktor Krum, Daniel Potter, and Fleur Delacour are all tied and Cedric Diggory is only seven points behind them!"

"Therefore, all three will enter together and then five minutes later Cedric will enter. Inside the maze each Champion will face creatures and dangers that most adult wizards have never had to challenge. Some of the beasts in here could make battle hardened aurors shake in terror!" The audience gasped in mock horror.

"Don't worry though, we have trained aurors and professors to assist if the Champions find themselves up against something they don't think they can beat. I'm now receiving the signal from my partner Mr. Fairfield. That means that on my go the first three Champions will enter the maze." Bagman paused and looked down happily at the three champions.

"Ready! Set! GO!"

A/N

I really don't like this chapter. I don't think FF does either. I've now tried editing it three times and it won't go through. Hopefully this time it will.

500 Reviews! The last chapter had 76 alone by the way.

Next chapter: Third Task and the Graveyard

Thanks for reading please review!

## Chapter 15: The Third Task

Harry and Ginny watched Daniel and the other Champions rush into the maze. A few minutes later Cedric entered the maze and the audience quieted down. There was no way to follow the progress of the contestants so the audience for the most part had to sit and wait to find out who would win. Harry quickly became bored and sat back to people watch.

A few rows down from where he was sitting Ron and Hermione were entrenched with the rest of the Weasley's. The elder Weasley's had briefly requested Ginny to sit with them, but didn't seem too disappointed when she declared she would be sitting with Harry. In fact Ron was the only one of the Weasley's sending glares towards Harry.

Lily and James were both focused solely on the maze watching intently for any sign of red sparks. It was fifteen minutes before the first sparks flew into the air. Moody, McGonagall, and a tall bald auror rushed into the maze towards the sparks.

### Break

When Daniel entered the maze he and the other two were stuck traveling along the same route. After what felt like miles they finally reached a three way fork. With a nod each one took a separate path. Daniel continued for what felt like another mile taking only a few twists and turns. He was beginning to wonder if there were any challenges in the maze when he turned another corner.

Prowling along in the path in front of him was a giant spider, easily twice as big as himself. It appeared that the spider hadn't noticed him yet, which he was thankful for. He quickly ducked back behind the corner he'd just come from and went over the spells he knew looking for one that might help. A shrinking charm Hermione had taught him popped into his mind and thinking it was worth a shot he stepped back around the corner.

Daniel paused in shock. The spider had disappeared. The next turn was about a hundred yards away and in only a few second the spider had simply vanished. Walking forward cautiously Daniel made his way down the path towards the next turn. When he reached it, he paused for a second then leaped around the corner.

Once again there was nothing there.

Sighing in confusion Daniel progressed further into the maze. As he was approaching another corner he heard a girl scream and red sparks shot up into the air coming from around the next corner. Nervously Daniel rushed forward to the corner and nervously peeked around it.

Fleur was lying on the ground unconscious, her legs both clearly broken. Besides that there was nothing else in sight. Daniel stepped nervously around the corner and moved over to her unconscious form. A second later Cedric ran around the corner behind him. His robes were ripped and he had a large gash across his face. Daniel glanced up at him and then back at Fleur.

"What the hell happened to you two?" Daniel asked looking at the horrible condition the others were in.

"What do you mean? All these's crazy monsters in here, how the hell aren't you hurt?" Daniel once again looked at him in confusion.

"What do you mean? I haven't seen anything except a big spider, but it ran away before I could attack it." Cedric looked at him in disbelief, then shook his head.

"Lucky you. Do you know what attacked her?" He said gesturing towards the still unconscious Fleur.

"No I just heard her scream and saw the sparks." Before they could continue the conversation Moody, McGonagall, and a tall black auror rushed around the corner.

"What on earth happened here?" McGonagall was glancing between a beaten up Cedric, an unconscious Fleur, and a perfectly healthy Daniel.

"We're not sure Professor." McGonagall sighed and waved at the other two in a dismissive manner. They took the hint and proceeded on into the maze leaving Fleur with the teachers.

Break

The audience watched in stunned silence as Fleur was levitated out of the maze and into the medical tent. They barely had a second to wonder what had happened when an explosion ripped apart a ten foot area near the left side of the maze.

Break

Daniel had just separated from Cedric when the explosion occurred. The shockwave from the blast knocked him flat on his face. It took a minute for him to figure out where he was and what had happened. By the time he got back to his feet the hedges near him were slowly becoming engulfed in flames. Desperately he began conjuring water to extinguish the flames.

Soon more streams of water joined his as the professors and aurors moved in to extinguish the flames. Daniel spotted Cedric and seeing an opportunity turned and rushed back into the maze.

Break

Harry and Ginny could only watch in horror as the badly burned body of Viktor Krum was pulled from the burned and charred remains of the maze. It appeared he was still alive but the burns covered a large part of his body. He too soon disappeared into the medical tent.

Harry and Ginny were forced to sit in silence for another twenty minutes, now all eyes were on the maze. Finally almost an hour and a half after the event had started the alarms went off signaling that at least one of the contestants was approaching the cup.

Break

Daniel was beginning to get exhausted. He'd been running for what felt like hours and every new turn just seemed to lead him farther from the center of the maze. Finally he stumbled upon a path that seemed to be leading him in the right direction. He was sure he was getting closer when he encountered his first real challenge of the night.

Daniel had just turned a corner and could finally see the cup sitting on its pedestal when a large cat like creature appeared from the shadows.

"I am a sphinx, human. To pass you must answer my question. If you choose not to you may turn back now unharmed. If you answer incorrectly you will face the consequences." The sphinx paused to let this information sink in before continuing. "My question is this: The man who makes me doesn't want me. The man you buys me doesn't use me. The man who needs me doesn't know it. What am I?"

Daniel stood watching the large cat like creature before him. In his head he rolled the riddle over and over looking at it from every angle he could.

'The man who makes me doesn't want me.' He thought in his head.

'Well, what would I make but not want?' A second voice answered.

'Probably something involving death.'

'Well, what can you make that involves death, but you wouldn't want?'

'A tombstone?'

'Yea but the person who needs it would be aware of it, right?'

'Yea probably...'

'What about a coffin?'

'That's it!'

"Is it a coffin?" The sphinx smiled a predatory smile, and Daniel took a step back thinking he'd guessed the wrong answer.

"That is correct." Without another word the sphinx stepped back allowing Daniel to run past quickly.

Daniel sprinted as fast as he could towards the Cup. He'd just entered the large empty area of grass around the cup when he saw a hulking black spider rush out of the shadows towards one of the other entrances. Glancing in that direction Daniel was just in time to see Cedric get knocked on his back by the large spider.

"Nice try Cedric, but it looks like I won!" Daniel was reaching towards the Tri-wizard cup while looking back over his shoulder at Cedric who was pinned under the giant spider.

As Daniel's fingers closed around the cup there was a flash and both he and the cup disappeared.

Break

Only seconds after Daniel and the Cup disappeared the maze plunged back into the ground. Without the thick hedges everyone in the stadium could see Cedric desperately trying to dodge the attacks of the giant spider. Also evident was the large empty pedestal where the cup and Daniel should have been. As confused murmurs began to break out around the stadium the professor's and aurors rushed towards the spider currently trying to decapitate Cedric. They were just in time to blast it away from him.

Break

Daniel reappeared in a large empty graveyard. Around him were large tombstones marking the sites of those long dead. Shakily he rose to his feet looking around the graveyard for any clue as to why he was there. He caught sight of a shadowy figure moving towards him before there was a shout of 'Stupefy!' and a flash of red, then Daniel's world went black.

Break

"I don't know Professor! I saw him grab the Cup then there was a flash and he disappeared! I swear that's it." Cedric all but shouted as the Headmaster asked him for the fourth time to tell what he'd seen when Daniel took the cup. It'd been almost twenty minutes since the maze disappeared, and Daniel still hadn't been found.

"Thanks you my boy." Dumbledore turned back to the crowd that had gathered. Harry, Ginny, Lily, James, the older Weasley's, Ron, Hermione, Moody, McGonagall, and Fudge were all gathered off to the side of the Quidditch pitch. They'd all been trying to figure out how Daniel had disappeared.

Harry and Ginny had been hanging by the edge of the group carefully watching everyone around them. The idea that this was some sort of prank Daniel had set up was still a very good possibility to them. That was before Harry's scar exploded in a burning pain. He let out a loud gasp as both hands immediately moved to the area of his head where the scar was. Ginny was helping him to an empty seat immediately and no one else in the group noticed their departure.

'Harry what is it?'

'I don't know! I think it's him.'

'Who?'

'Voldemort.' A second later Harry lost consciousness as his body succumbed to the pain of Voldemort's rebirth.

Break

Daniel had woken up to a burning pain on his forearm. Opening his eyes he found a masked man using a large silver knife to cut his arm. As the man collected the blood Daniel vaguely heard him whisper:

"Blood the enemy, forcibly taken. You will resurrect your foe. " Without waiting the man dumped the vial of blood into a large boiling cauldron. That was when Daniel saw that one of the man's arms was missing from the elbow down.

"W-What are you doing?" The man laughed harshly but turned back to the cauldron watching it intently. Daniel followed his gaze and watched in growing curiosity as the potion began to smoke and bubble.

As the potion began to bubble more and more violently a subtle glow also began to immerge from the center of it. Finally a blinding white flash forced Daniel to turn away from the cauldron. When the glow subsided and Daniel was able to look back at the cauldron a grotesque sight met his eyes. Rising from the cauldron was a pale scarred naked body, the face was turned away from him.



"Robe me!" The voice the creature spoke with was high and Daniel knew it was evil. The black robed man hurried forward with another black robe and handed it to the naked creature. Once the creature had it's robe on it stepped out of the cauldron and turned to face Daniel.

"Ah, Daniel Potter. What a pleasure." The creatures face was just as pale as the rest of him and the skinned seemed to be pulled taut against the bones. There was no hair anywhere and it's nose was simply two narrow slits. It's lips were pale and almost nonexistent while it's eyes were blood red and seemed to emanate power.

"W-Who are you?" The creature let out a harsh high pitched laugh and glared at Daniel.

"I am Lord Voldemort, you pathetic mudblood!" Daniel's face which had already been masked in fear and shock, lost all color and his eyes bulged out of his head.

"T-That's not possible! I-I killed you!"

"Ha! You! Beat me! That's laughable. You never defeated me. You're brother though, he is truly powerful. If only my servants hadn't been so incompetent..." He paused to glare side long at the quivering mass of flesh on the ground by his feet.

"What are you talking about! Harry didn't beat you! I did! Everyone knows that!"

"Everyone's wrong then! Who would know better? I was there, do you think I don't know who killed me!" Daniel's mind momentarily shut down as it tried to process what he was being told, when he finally came back to his senses Voldemort was in the middle of speaking. "Then he conjured some sort of shield and reflected my own curse back at me! I was banished from my body before I had the chance to kill you!"

"N-No, that's not possible... Dumbledore told me-" Voldemort cut Daniel off as he continued to laugh harshly.

"Dumbledore is a pathetic old fool! He has no idea what could have happened that night! I grow tired of your babbling. Crucio!" Daniel's world ignited in pain as the violent curse struck him.

Break

'Harry! Harry! Please come back to me love!' Ginny's voice pushed through the fog of pain surrounding Harry's mind and he latched onto it with everything he had desperately trying to pull himself out of the fog he was in.

'Ginny!' Harry finally pulled himself back into consciousness and looked up into the tear stained face of his soul mate. 'I'm ok Ginny. I'm ok.' Ginny had her arms wrapped around him in an instant covering his face in desperate kisses.

'I was so afraid I'd lost you.'

'You didn't lose me. I'll never leave you Ginny.'

"Oi you two! How could you be so inconsiderate? Daniel's missing and you're over there snogging!" Ron yelled. Harry and Ginny looked over to find the rest of the group had stopped to stare at them. Most of the group was looking at them in shock and disgust. Lily looked torn and frustrated by what her oldest son was doing while her youngest was missing.

"Ron shut up! You have no idea what you're talking about!" Ginny's voice was filled with fury and her hair seemed to be blowing in a nonexistent wind.

"You're snogging while Daniel is missing! Show's how much you care!"

'Gin we don't have time for this. We've got to find Daniel.'

'Ok Harry. But how can we get him?'

'I think I have an idea, I just need to get away.'

'Alright.' Ron was still yelling at them and the others seemed to be siding with him more and more.

"Fine Ron! We'll leave, it's not like any of you are doing much to find Daniel anyway!" Ron stopped mid rant to glare at his sister, before

he could continue Ginny and Harry were walking as quickly as possible towards the exit.

They'd just made it to the outside of the stadium when Lily caught up with them.

"You know something." It wasn't a question. Harry and Ginny looked guiltily at Lily before he nodded slowly.

"Voldemort has him." Lily gasped and fell to her knees in horror. Tears that she had been holding back for so long sprung forth and poured down her face.

"No, no, no, no... my poor baby." Harry pulled his mother into a powerful hug holding her tightly.

"It's ok mum, I'm going to get him." Lily tensed up and grasped Harry tightly.

"No! You can't go too! I can't lose both of you!"

"You won't lose me mum I promise. If my plan is safe enough for Ginny to agree to it, don't you think it's safe enough for you?" Lily looked desperately at Ginny who nodded solemnly.

"Fine, you can go. But if it looks like you can't get him, you come back. L-Leave your brother. I-I know you won't listen but I can't lose both of you." Harry smiled kindly at his mother as he transferred her to Ginny's arms and took a step back from them.

Harry kissed Ginny lightly on the lips and then concentrated on his phoenix form. Two minutes later a beautiful golden phoenix stood where Harry had been. He trilled lovingly to his mother and soul mate then disappeared in a flash of flames.

Break

Daniel recovered from the pain of the cruciatus curse slowly. His world spun in and out of focus as the pain slowly subsided. When he once again became fully aware of where he was Voldemort was talking to a group of black robed people. He recognized them as the Death Eaters that had attacked the World Cup. There was almost

twenty of them gathered in a circle around the gravestone he was tied to.

"My faithful servants, it so good to see all of you returned to me. Tonight begins the dawning of a new era! An era of darkness and death! All those who oppose us will be wiped from existence! And tonight we'll start with young Mr. Potter..." Voldemort paused as the Death Eaters cheered loudly. "Lucius free the boy and give him his wand back. I so enjoy when they try to fight back."

Daniel fell forward onto the ground as the ropes binding him to the gravestone disappeared. A Death Eater with a bright silver hand walked up and kicked him in the stomach. Daniel rolled over in pain and the Death Eater dropped his wand onto his stomach. The other Death Eaters watched gleefully as Daniel rose shakily to his feet.

"Imperio!" the curse hit Daniel full on and he was enveloped in a cloud of peace filled bliss. As he floated along in this peaceful state he heard a small voice.

'Punch yourself in the face!' It sounded like a good idea, so he did it. 'Again!' So he did it again.

'Run into the tombstone!' Daniel turned peacefully and with blood pouring from his nose rushed forward full force into the tombstone. The resulting collision caused two of his ribs to snap.

'Stop breathing!' So he did. Slowly the world began to get hazy and then black spots appeared as Daniel began to lose consciousness. This time another smaller voice appeared in his head, 'This isn't a good idea! Breathe!' The peaceful cloud of ignorance faded slightly and Daniel realized what was happening. With a gasp he began desperately taking in a lungful of air.

"Oh damn! He finally broke free. And I was so hoping he'd kill himself." The Death Eaters laughed joyfully. While Daniel had been under the Imperius curse they had spread out and were lazing about the graveyard watching the show their master was giving them.

"Well, let's properly duel then! Diffindo!" Daniel barely managed to roll out of the path of the curse but the pain from his face and chest forced him to cry out in agony as he rolled on his injuries. "Tsk, Tsk, Potter. This is a rather pitiful duel. I hope your brother puts up a

better fight when I find him." He paused and looked at the crying boy in front of him.

"I grow bored of this. Time to end it. Avada-" Voldemort was interrupted by a flash of light.

Break

Once Harry had finished his transformation into a phoenix he briefly pondered how to use flame travel. He knew Daniel didn't have much time. Concentrating with all his might he suddenly found the knowledge slipping into his consciousness. With the sudden appearance of how to utilize flame travel Harry began the process.

Not knowing where Daniel was, he concentrated on Daniel himself hoping that by centering in on his life force it would work. With a rush of power Harry disappeared only to reappear seconds later twenty feet above a rather crowded graveyard.

Break

"What the-?" Voldemort paused mid curse to look up at the phoenix hovering above him.

With a powerful trill that caused all the Death Eaters and Voldemort to flinch in pain Harry dove down towards the crumpled form of his brother. Voldemort recovered a few seconds before Harry reached his brother.

"Kill it! Kill it quickly! Avada Kedavra!" The green curse flew past Harry barely missing him. Several other curses shot past him from the more attentive Death Eaters. The rest didn't even have their wands out and were still struggling to get them out when Harry landed on his brother.

Concentrating with all his might on Ginny, Harry and Daniel disappeared in a flash of fire as twenty more curses smashed into the ground they had just vacated.

"Ahhhhh! YOU FOOLS!" The Death Eaters hurriedly backed away from their enraged master as he turned on them.

Break

Harry and Daniel reappeared in front of a tearful Lily and Ginny barely two minutes after Harry had disappeared. Harry disappeared again immediately and reappeared in a secluded area a little ways away from them. He transformed back into himself and then ran back to his family.

Lily was busily leaning over Daniel healing as many of his wounds as she could. Ginny was standing to the side waiting for Harry. He ran over to her and took her hand as he watched his mother work. Once the majority of his wounds were healed she conjured a stretcher for him and started towards the infirmary.

"Gin you go with her. Watch her, I'm going to go tell the others." Ginny nodded and sprinted after Lily. Harry turned and rushed back into the stadium.

Break

He found everyone still grouped together and anxiously watching the field for any sign of Daniel. He rolled his eyes at their uselessness and rushed up to Dumbledore.

"Daniels back!" the entire group turned as one to look at Harry. "He just reappeared with a phoenix! Mum took him to the infirmary." The group waited perhaps a second before taking off towards the school. Harry tiredly followed along behind them.

Break

When they reached the infirmary Daniel had regained consciousness and was gripping his mothers hand tightly. Ginny sat to the side cautiously watching them. When Harry entered she strode purposefully to his side and grasped his hand tightly. She kissed him lightly on the cheek and then turned back to Daniel.

"You lied!" Daniel was sitting straight up in bed his gaze focused on Dumbledore and James. Both looked at him in confusion as he glared at them. "You said he was dead! You said I beat him!" By this point James was so confused he was sure his son was hallucinating.

"What are you talking about Daniel?" Daniel glared at his father before his gaze flicked to Harry.

"You-Know-Who! He's back! I never killed him! He said Harry did it! He never attacked me! Why would you lie about that?" The entire group bar James and Lily turned to look at Harry in shock. Harry kept looking pointedly at his brother, but allowed himself to use the bond to view Dumbledore and his parents reactions through Ginny.

Dumbledore's face fell as he realized for the first time he had been sucking up to the wrong boy. All his plans seemed to crash down around him as Daniel jealously revealed who the real savior was. James acted much the same way as the truth that his eldest son was really the powerful one hit him. He staggered backwards and collapsed onto an empty bed across from Daniel. Lily sagged slightly in her seat, but it only lasted a second before she straightened again. First she had to take care of her injured son, then she'd handle her other son. She glanced questioningly at Harry hoping he would understand and without looking away from his brother nodded slightly in her direction.

"T-That's impossible!" All eyes turned towards Minister Fudge who was standing near the back of the group. "You-Know-Who can't be back! It's impossible!" Daniel turned to glare at the Minister before spitting out hatefully.

"He is back! He tortured me tonight! I saw him!" The Minister shook his head in disbelief.

"I'm afraid you must have been mistaken! You-Know-who is not back! Here are you're winnings Mr. Potter. Good Day!" The minister dropped a large bag of gold on the table next to Daniel's bed, turned, and left.

"But he is back I saw him!" Lily began to soothingly brush the hair away from Daniel's face.

"I know. I believe you Daniel." Daniel smiled gratefully at his mother. Then turned back to Dumbledore.

"How did they change the cup? How come it was a portkey that took me directly to Him?" Dumbledore nodded distractedly towards Daniel then turned to Moody.

"Alastor this reminds me of the Devon incident in 1958. They used the same ploy back then to try and increase Grindelwald's power." Moody was silent for a second before nodding his head.

"Yes, I remember that vaguely. I'll need to reread the file on it though." Almost before he'd finished talking Dumbledore, McGonagall, James, Arthur, Harry, and Ginny had their wands pointed at the scarred Professor.

"I'm afraid you won't have the chance Bartemis. I defeated Grindelwald in 1945. Nothing ever happened in Devon in the 1950's." The fake Moody gulped audibly before grabbing something in his coat. Three stunners, one each from Dumbledore, Harry, and Ginny, hit the imposter just as he activated the portkey in his jacket and disappeared.

"Perhaps we should allow Daniel to rest before he retell's what happened to him tonight. I'll have to ask for everyone but immediate family to leave." Everyone glanced at Daniel for a second before moving towards the door. Ginny was the only one not a Potter or Dumbledore who didn't move. Dumbledore glanced at Harry and her before sighing and waving for them to sit.

"I will wait until tomorrow to question you further Mr. Potter. Until then I hope you can sleep well. James can you come with me, I think I should begin contacting the members of my old bird watching club." James nodded to Dumbledore and followed him out of the room.

Once the door had closed Harry and Ginny curled up together on the bed next to Daniels and fell asleep in record time.

A/N

Well there it is. Next chapter will be the assorted reactions.

Sorry to everyone who wanted to see Daniel die.

Just a note the story will probably be changing to a mature rating. things are going to be getting a bit darker. Major character death in the coming chapters. I'm pretty sure a lot of you won't mind though.

Thanks for all the wonderful reviews! Next Chapter: Fallout



## Chapter 16: Fallout

Harry and Ginny were awoken the next morning by arguing voices.

"I demand to see them Lily! They are currently students under my jurisdiction in my hospital wing!" Dumbledore's voice permeated the curtain around Harry and Ginny's bed.

"That's too bad Headmaster, they are my children!"

"Ms. Weasley is not your child, therefore you have no right to prevent me seeing her."

"She's guaranteed to be my daughter one day, whether by marriage or not I will not let you see them."

"Mrs. Potter! I demand you let me pass or bring Ms. Weasley to me! I am the Headmaster and I wish to discuss last night's event with her." Harry and Ginny heard someone walking across the infirmary from somewhere near the door and then Mrs. Weasley's voice joined the heated argument.

"Albus my daughter is still resting! I agree with Lily let the children sleep!" Harry and Ginny both rolled their eyes at being called children and they heard Daniel groan in protest from the bed next to theirs.

"Fine. I see I am defeated in this matter." Dumbledore paused letting this sink in then continued. "I really must be going, Cornelius has already begun circulating false reports of what happened last night." The sound of retreating footsteps and then the closing of the infirmary door confirmed his departure.

"He's going to try and influence them..." Lily's voice sounded defeated as she let the statement hang.

"Most likely but it is Albus. I may not agree with some of his recent actions but his influence on the children could only be good." Molly's tone was hopeful but Harry and Ginny both got the sense that it was false.

"A few years ago I would have agreed with that. Now I think it would probably be better for all of us if we just took them and ran far away."

Neither of them would go along with that though. They're too kind, they'd do whatever they could if it meant helping people."

"No, at least we can always rest knowing that in the end we raised two marvelous children." Molly said.

"Well, I have some questions for our two marvelous children, and I think you'll want to hear these answers too." A second later the curtain around their bed opened and the two mothers walked in. They closed the curtain around them and put up several privacy charms.

"Would either of you care to explain what happened last night?" Harry and Ginny glanced guiltily at one another and seemed to wither under Lily's accusatory glare.

"I don't know what you mean mum." Lily narrowed her eyes, but nevertheless raised her hand and began to tick off on her fingers.

"Harry collapsing in pain shortly after Daniel disappears, Ginny zoning out for several minutes before Harry wakes up, then Ginny holding Harry desperately, almost like he'd been about to die. Oh yes and Harry having a second Animagus form!" Harry and Ginny had flinched after each point and Molly gasped loudly at the mention of Harry's Animagus forms.

"Third." Harry muttered under his breath.

"What?" Lily asked in confusion watching her son.

"The phoenix is our third form." Ginny elbowed him in the ribs at the use of a plural pronoun and Molly's head snapped towards her daughter.

"Our?" Ginny sighed in defeat and glared side long at Harry.

"Yesour forms. I'm an Animagus mum." Molly nodded her head slowly, her cheeks turning red as she fought to hold back her anger.

"What forms?"

"A falcon, a tiger, and a phoenix." Molly's face paled and her mouth dropped open as Ginny spoke.

"My word... I thought a person could only have one form." Ginny and Harry sheepishly looked away from Molly, so Lily decided to answer.

"These two never do anything by halves." Molly laughed lightly and shook her head in amusement.

"No. No they definitely don't do that."

"Back to the matter at hand, why did Harry collapse in pain last night?"

"It was my scar. When Voldemort came back it felt like my entire forehead was on fire." Lily looked at Harry's forehead in confusion.

"What scar?" Harry sighed and separated his hair just above the hair line. A long thin lightening bolt shaped scar was revealed under the mesh of hair. Lily gasped and moved forward to examine it closely.

"Why did you never tell us about this?"

"It never seemed really important. I couldn't even remember getting it, until the summer after first year." Lily and Molly both gasped understanding the meaning of his words. Lily shakily placed a hand on Harry's shoulder and looked him in the eyes.

"Harry, you remember that night?"

Break

Ron and Hermione hadn't slept the night before. Instead they'd sat in the common room staring off into space. Both had been lost in their own little worlds trying to process the information they'd been given the night before. It felt like they'd been living a lie up to that point and neither was sure what to do now. After a few hours Hermione finally leaned forward in her chair drawing Ron's attention.

"I guess we should just pretend like nothings happened. The rest of the school doesn't know anything, and unless Daniel say's something they never will." Ron let the idea roll around in his head. If one looked hard enough they could actually see his poor brain cell

working hard to analyze the idea. In the brains department, Ron could easily be confused for Crabbe or Goyle.

"That makes sense..." Ron agreed slowly.

"Of course it does. Now lets go visit Daniel." Ron nodded and followed Hermione out of the room, just like a trained dog.

Break

James Potter sat silently in his quarters looking at a picture on his nightstand. In it he and Daniel were joyfully passing the new Firebolt back and forth between each other. He'd spent most of the night staring at the picture. Only recently had he shown any signs of life when he glanced over his shoulder at the picture on Lily's nightstand. It was the only family picture they had.

In it Harry stood smiling next to his mother who had one arm wrapped around his shoulders. Next to her James lovingly held her hand while he wrapped his other arm around Daniel's shoulder. The picture was the only one he knew of where he and Harry appeared together willingly and looking happy. Smiling sadly he turned his attention back to the photo in his hands.

"I made my choice long ago. No turning back now." Sighing in resignation he placed the photo back on the nightstand. Without a second glance at either photo he showered quickly and left for the infirmary.

Break

Albus Dumbledore had spent the entire night flooing as many of his old friends and colleagues as he could. The list had been surprisingly short, a grim reminder of the price paid during the last war. He'd finally branched out and started contacting promising students from the last fifteen years. All of this had distracted him from the true problems going on around him.

He had spent the last four years carefully training and maneuvering Daniel into position so that when the time came he would be ready for his fight with Tom. Now all those plans were undone. Harry Potter, the slightly above average brother was in actuality the boy-who-lived and thus the chosen one.

Worst of all Harry and his bond mate Ginerva had absolutely no trust in him. This would make it exceedingly difficult to bend them to his will. Worst yet a simple Imperious Curse wouldn't work on a bonded couple. His mother was also proving to be very protective of him and had twice kept him from speaking with Harry.

He would need to find a way to isolate Harry and allow him constant access to the boy. Perhaps suggesting the family spend the summer at the new Order Headquarters would be a good idea. That was most likely the only way to allow Harry to see his point of view.

"It's the only way." The solemn words brought a forlorn trill from the phoenix on the perch behind him. The headmaster hardly noticed as he returned to his plotting.

Break

"Yes I remember that night. I'd rather not talk about it. Just know that Voldemort tried to curse me, but something prevented it. I don't know what." Lily nodded sadly before hugging Harry tightly.

"I suppose you two heard our conversation with the Headmaster?" Upon receiving a confirmatory nod Lily continued. "Good, just know Molly and I will do everything we can to let you live as normal a life as you can. The Headmaster's always been fanatically interested in Daniel. I believe with this new revelation his attention will switch to the two of you."

"We figured." Ginny said in a tone that clearly showed she disliked the idea.

"Alright. Just please don't do anything rash." She looked pointedly at Harry. A second later she cancelled the privacy spells and opened the curtains. Standing around Daniel's bed were James, Dumbledore, Hermione and Ron. He seemed to be in the middle of retelling what had happened to him the night before.

"...Then you-know-who stood up out of the cauldron. He had Malfoy bring him a cloak and then I kind of passed out again. When I woke up he taunted me a little bit then made me duel him." Dumbledore nodded listening intently to Daniel's story.

"I got a few good hits on him. I even cut up his left arm with a cutting curse. When he started using Unforgivable's though there was nothing I could do." Hermione held her friend's hand comfortingly.

"How did you escape Daniel?" Harry, Ginny, and Lily all leaned closer to see what Daniel said.

"I-I think a phoenix came and rescued me. I'm not sure I was drifting in and out of consciousness at that point." Everyone around him was silent as Harry, Ginny, and Lily said a silent pray that Daniel hadn't realized what actually happened. "Headmaster, what's going to happen with the Ministry. Did you convince Minister Fudge that I'm not lying about you-know-who?"

"Alas, I was unable to convince Cornelius to see the truth of your statements. Do not fear though, I have already begun to alert those who can help us fight. Lily, James I was wondering if I could perhaps talk to you." Lily reluctantly agreed and followed James and Dumbledore to the other side of the infirmary where they talked in hushed voices for several minutes. While they spoke Harry and Ginny fell asleep again.

Break

What felt like a second later Harry and Ginny found themselves standing once again on the giant rock in Central Park. They looked around in curiosity and were only mildly surprised when Razzak and Lisna burst into existence before them.

'Greetings young ones.' Razzak landed lightly on Harry's shoulder while Lisna did the same to Ginny. Harry reached up and gently pet the phoenixes head.

"Hello Razzak. Any reason why we're here?" Razzak made the phoenix equivalent of a laugh.

'Always to the point Harry. In this case it's good, we have very limited time. Lisna and myself have decided that the two of you need a vacation.' Harry and Ginny both froze and looked at their respective phoenixes in shock.

"You're kidding right?" Once again the phoenixes laughed at them.

'No, Voldemort is still too weak to effectively attack anything. He will remain in hiding until his forces have been restored. This is the last full summer of peace you will have until he is defeated. We think you should both go on a vacation. Outside Britain of course.'

"Uh-huh, and where do you think we should go?" Ginny's tone was heavy with disbelief as the phoenixes argued their case.

'Here.'

"Here? How do you expect us to get here?"

'You are both phoenix.' Lisna said, as if it were the most obvious thing in the world.

"We don't have the money for it." Once again the phoenixes laughed at them.

'Perhaps you should check the conversion rate on a solid gold coin to muggle currency, it is rather high.'

"I don't see what that has to do with anything."

'The goblins still make galleons from two ounces of pure gold. You could most likely trade one galleon for about two thousand American dollars.' This information stopped Harry and Ginny cold. Each had about ten galleons to their name, and they each knew how much muggle goods cost.

"How can muggle parents afford to put their children in Hogwarts then?"

'Simple, the Ministries control the goblin exchange rate. It helps muggleborns but unfortunately hinders the goblins. So do not trade with goblins. Go to a muggle exchange area and pretend you inherited them from a relative. You will find at least one in London, try not to let yourselves be taken advantage of.' The dream slowly began to fade away to darkness, so Harry shouted one final question.

"Why should we come? Will we see you again?" As the dream finally faded to nothing both heard Razzak's voice echo inside their heads.

'If you come we shall teach you.'

Break

Harry and Ginny woke up once again to the sound of arguing voices. Lily was yelling angrily at James and Dumbledore who both refused to back down.

"We will not be going to some run down old building! We will be staying at Potter Manor and that's final!"

"Lily the headquarters will be the safest place for your family. With Voldemort once again on the loose Potter Manor will require extra wards, those will take time to set up. Headquarters is almost prepared and will be ready when school ends at the end of the week."

"How is Headquarters nearly ready in a week, yet Potter Manor will require all summer?"

"Headquarters already had most of the protections placed on it before today. It's an old pureblood house." Lily brought one hand up to cover her eyes in frustration. It was obvious that James and Dumbledore refused to budge on the matter.

"Fine. We'll stay at Headquarters for the summer." Lily turned and stormed past Harry and Ginny making a subtle gesture for them to follow. Quietly the two stood and left behind the fuming red head.

Break

"I'm sorry Harry. I wanted to avoid this. The headmaster will undoubtedly try to influence you while we're at Headquarters." Lily had walked to her office and locked the door once Harry and Ginny followed her in.

"It's ok mum. I think we can handle it." Lily blanched and turned pleading eyes to Harry.

"I'm not sure if the Weasley's will be at Headquarters." Harry and Ginny grimaced, before nodding slowly.



"I still don't think it will matter that much." Lily's eyes narrowed in suspicion.

"What's that supposed to mean?"

'Should we tell her?'

'I don't know Harry, she's your mum.'

'I really don't want her to worry.'

'As long as she doesn't try to stop us.'

'I don't think she will.'

"Ginny and I have our own plans for the summer." Lily nodded slowly, looking carefully between the two.

"Mmhmm, May I ask what those are?"

"We're going on a vacation, sort of." Lily's eyebrows rose in disbelief.

"How do you plan to pay for this?" Harry reached into his pocket and pulled out a small handful of galleons.

"With this."

"That's not enough to pay for much." Harry and Ginny both smirked mischievously.

"Not in the wizarding world, but converting these using muggle standards would give us a small fortune." Lily's eyes widened at Harry's words as she realized what they were planning.

"So you'll have the money, where do you plan to go."

"You can't tell anyone , please mum." Lily sighed and held her hand over her heart.

"I promise I won't willingly tell a soul where you're going. I've said it several times that if you two are planning something there's not much we can do to stop it." Harry and Ginny both smiled thankfully at Lily.

"New York. We're going to New York, it seems safe, plus Voldemort won't have the forces to track us yet." Lily's eyes widened in surprise and then glazed over slightly as she focused on a point behind them. After several seconds she shook her head and smiled at the two teenagers before her.

"May I come with you? I have an old friend in New York who we'll be able to stay with." Harry and Ginny were genuinely shocked and turned to have a silent conversation. After several seconds they turned back to Lily and Ginny spoke.

"We suppose it wouldn't hurt to have an adult with us. It might even stop my mum from thinking we eloped or something crazy like that." Lily laughed quietly knowing Molly would most likely believe something like that.

"This is actually something I did. Before James and I fully joined in the fighting last time, we took a vacation to France. I'm sorry you feel you have to do it this young."

"Who's your friend mum?" Lily smiled knowingly at Harry before answering.

"Her names Elizabeth. She's my best friend from Hogwarts. She's also you're godmother." Harry's mouth fell open in shock, and he could only stutter unintelligently as Lily ushered them out of her office.

Break

Daniel had spent almost thirty minutes retelling his story to Ron and Hermione not sparing any detail, even making up several to make himself sound better. Afterwards they'd sunk into a heated discussion.

"Daniel you can't tell anyone about your brother." Hermione pleaded.

"Why not?"

"Think of all the people who do things for you just because you're the boy-who-lived!"

"So? Harry's the one who deserved all the attention I didn't do much."

"Didn't do much! Who beat Quirrell in first year? Who survived two different assassination attempts in second year? Who beat a dementor single handedly in third year? Who just won the Tri-wizard tournament? You did Daniel! What's Harry ever done anyway? He's a social no body. No one needs to know. It's not like it matters anyway. You're the one Dumbledore and your dad have been giving the extra training to. You'll beat you-know-who this time." The entire time Hermione had been talking Daniel had slowly been sitting straighter in his bed.

"Yea, I guess you're right Hermione. Harry is a no body!"

"Damn straight mate." Ron entered the conversation for the first time.

James took that moment to stride over proudly and lay a kind hand on Daniel's shoulder.

"Madam Pomfrey said you're finally able to leave Daniel. I believe you have crowds of adoring fans to attend to." James laughed lightly at his own joke before ushering Ron and Hermione out so that Daniel could change.

Break

"Students! As many of you have heard, Daniel Potter was taken by Lord Voldemort earlier this week." The student body shivered at the name and many turned admiring eyes towards Daniel. "Voldemort has indeed returned and I must beg all students practice caution this summer. He will begin moving against us soon. Unfortunately the Ministry has decided to ignore all warnings and continue in ignorance. It is up to all of us as individuals to prepare ourselves for the coming Darkness!" A majority of the Gryffindor's and some students from Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw cheered.

"But we must remember that all though Darkness may be closing in on us, the sun will rise again. Light shall overcome the Darkness! For all it takes to keep the shadows at bay is a single light. Light and Darkness are in constant motion, but as night passes, so will this threat. And in the end we shall all be stronger for it!" This time all the tables, minus Slytherin, cheered loudly at the impassioned speech.

Harry and Ginny sat enjoying the final day of school. The day before Harry had used his phoenix transformation to go to London. They'd transfigured their galleons to look like old Spanish gold coins. He'd traded in five and collected almost nine thousand American Dollars. Easily enough to last them a month in New York, they planned on returning near the end of July.

So it was with a knowing smile they boarded the train the next morning, Ginny had already prepared her letter explaining things to her mother.

A/N

First off, i don't know if there's a difference between trading gold coins and normal gold, i just looked up the price of gold online and it said 1 ounce is about \$900. I realize how much that would make each galleon weigh but i'm making that part up as i go.

Thanks to all my reviewers! 98 reviews for the last chapter alone!

I choose NYC just because i know it well enough to write about it. Other places on my list were Disney Land, Paris, or Rome. I figured i'd save disney land for an appearance in the epilogue: "Harry Potter you just beat the Dark Lord Voldemort! What are you going to do next?" "I'm going to Disney Land!"

Next Chapter: New York/ The Order Panics/ Meeting Elizabeth

## Chapter 17: Disappearance/ NYC part 1

Molly Weasley was content. Almost her entire family was home for at least a week. Only Percy was out at his apartment, but he'd been returning home regularly. So she'd planned a large breakfast for her youngest children's first day home from school. The only problem with this was that she had to get up unbelievably early, but it was worth it.

She was so focused on cooking breakfast she missed the plain looking white envelope sitting on the kitchen table. It wasn't until Bill stumbled down the stairs at quarter after eight that attention was drawn to the envelope.

"Morning mum," Bill yawned as he sat down at the table. His attention was immediately drawn to the unopened envelope with his mother's name on it. "Mum, there's a letter here for you."

Molly paused while flipping over some sausages to glance over her shoulder at the envelope on the table. "Oh be a dear Bill, and just read it to me, I can't leave the sausages or they'll burn."

"Alright mum." Bill lazily flicked open the envelope and pulled out the letter. Unfolding it he began reading, not really paying attention to what he was saying.

Dear mum,

Please don't be mad. You are going to be mad but hopefully by the time I get back, you won't be. There's really no way to say this so, Harry and I have gone on vacation we'll be back before my birthday.

Bill stopped reading as Molly yelped and spun around to make a grab for the letter. Bill quickly scanned the rest of the letter before passing it to his mother. As Molly took the letter she heard Bill mutter, "and I really liked that kid too," under his breath. Molly quickly began reading the rest of the letter.

Please don't worry, Mrs. Potter has come with us. I realize I should have told you, but we really, really, really don't want the Headmaster to find out. We'd tell you where we are going, but once again we don't want the headmaster to know. Mrs. Potter is going to be

watching over us like a hawk and we'll be staying with friends who can protect us if need be.

We seriously doubt Voldemort will find us, or even be inclined to try as of right now. If Dumbledore asks, you can at least truthfully tell him you don't know where we are. Please don't be mad. Tell everyone I love them, even Ron. Tell dad and the rest that Harry will keep my purity intact until we're married, and if they try anything when we get back they'll have to answer to me.

Love,

Ginny

Molly couldn't help but smile at the veiled threat near the end. She knew it was there to put her own fears to rest more than the others. The smile only lasted a minute before she strode purposefully over to the stairs.

"ARTHUR GET DOWN HERE NOW!" It took only three seconds for Arthur to come hurtling down the stairs, wand in hand, closely followed by all the other boys. Ron's attention was immediately drawn to the food layering the counters.

"What is it? Are we under attack?" Arthur's eyes were darting around the kitchen as he spoke, finally they came to rest on his red faced, extremely furious wife.

"Read this." Her words were quiet and forced and he could easily pick up the under lying fury. This scared him more than her outright yelling. Treating the piece of parchment as if it were a bomb he took it carefully from his wife and read the contents.

Near the end he smiled despite his best attempt not too. Once he was done he quietly passed the letter to a curious Charlie who'd been attempting to read over his shoulder. Then he turned back to his wife who was still shaking in rage. He could see why she might be upset but this amount of anger seemed a bit more than was necessary.

"Molly it will be fine. Lily is with them, she won't let anything happen to them."

Molly sighed in frustration and clenched and unclenched her fists. "I'm not angry at them. I'm surprised I didn't see this coming. I'm furious with Albus! He's the reason they felt the need to run!"

Arthur was a little taken aback, he hadn't expected Molly's outright anger at the headmaster. "I should probably floo the Headmaster." Arthur was so concentrated on his wife he never noticed Dumbledore appearing near the door to the kitchen.

"There is no need Arthur, I'm already aware."

Break

Twenty minutes earlier...

Grimmauld Place was almost empty. The only occupants should have been Lily, James, Daniel and Harry. (Sirius had an apartment of his own and avoided Grimmauld Place like the plague.) Unfortunately half those occupants weren't currently residing there. James was up at eight as usual, his auror training had forced him to become a morning person many years ago.

So, he found the plain envelope on the kitchen table when he arrived to prepare breakfast. He casually opened it thinking it was a letter from an Order member. He was surprised to find his wife's handwriting on the piece of parchment within. His mouth slowly fell open as he read more and more of the letter. Finally cursing under his breath he strode purposefully to the fireplace and threw in some floo powder.

"Albus Dumbledore!" He felt the vague lightheaded feeling as his head momentarily separated from his body while it transported to Hogwarts. A second later Dumbledore's office appeared around him, the Headmaster was of course already sitting behind his desk busily working on papers. "Albus!" Dumbledore looked up and smiled warmly at James' head.

"Ah, James how good to see you. I was thinking of joining you at Headquarters for breakfast."

James smiled grimly at the Headmaster before speaking. "I have bad news, Harry and Lily have run away."

Dumbledore's smile immediately vanished as he rose from his seat and strode towards the fireplace. "What? Why would they have run away?"

"I shouldn't have said run away. They actually worded it as going on vacation, only Lily didn't mention where they were going in her letter."

"I fear they may have been kidnapped. James I'll be coming through in a second to conduct some tests." Dumbledore moved back to his desk grabbing a piece of parchment and a quill.

"Alright Albus. I'll be waiting in the kitchen. I just hope you're wrong." Without waiting James's head disappeared in a puff of green smoke.

Once James was gone, Dumbledore scribbled a quick message on the piece of parchment and folded it up. He turned to Fawkes and moved to attach the parchment to the phoenix's leg. Before he could though Fawkes disappeared and reappeared on the other side of the room.

"Now is not the time for games Fawkes. This letter must be brought to Lily and Harry, it is imperative they return to Grimmauld Place." Fawkes trilled sadly and disappeared in a ball of flames. Only this time he didn't reappear. Dumbledore sighed in agitation before disappearing through the floo network.

Break

Dumbledore stumbled out of the fireplace and into the kitchen of Grimmauld place. Sirius and Remus had both apparently been called as they stood anxiously beside James and Daniel. Dumbledore looked appraisingly at them before taking the letter James offered him.

Dear James and Daniel,

I'm sorry but Harry and I cannot spend the entire summer with you at Headquarters. We've decided to take a vacation, and have gone to stay with a friend. We'll be back sometime in August. Please don't worry about us we're fine.



I'm sorry you couldn't come but we don't want the Headmaster to find us and the two of you are too far in his camp. We'll be safe, Voldemort won't be powerful enough to try anything this summer. Don't bother to try questioning Ginny on this, she decided to come with us. Please don't try to track us, we won't be coming back and we won't let you force us.

We'll bring back presents!

Love,

Lily & Harry

Dumbledore stared at the letter in shock. He hadn't realized Lily mistrusted him that much. His normal twinkle faded noticeably as he placed the letter down on the table. He looked sadly to James and the others as a battled raged in his mind. He was torn between his desire to protect Harry and his desire to respect Lily's wishes. Finally he sighed and realized he couldn't make this decision himself.

"James, please call the rest of the Order. Tell them to meet here in two hours. We need to discuss how we will react to this." Dumbledore said as he moved back to the fireplace.

"Where are you going?" Sirius called after him.

"To the Weasley's, they might have some information on this." Dumbledore reached for the floo powder then seemed to reconsider. Instead he turned on the spot and disappeared with a pop.

Break

"This is your fault!" Molly Weasley's anger had found an outlet when Dumbledore made his presence known. He immediately took a step back from the door as Molly stormed through it and began poking Dumbledore in the chest.

"If you hadn't constantly favored Daniel and pushed them away they never would have left! They're running from you Albus, who knows what new low you'd sink to, to control them now!" Dumbledore winced after every word Molly spoke. He knew that this was mostly his fault, but he'd never expected Molly to react this way. It seemed

his actions against Harry and Ginny were slowly driving everyone away from him.

"I've realized that Molly. However, I've come to see if you have any information on where Harry or Ginerva have gone." Dumbledore was shocked when Molly's hand snapped out and slapped him across the face.

"Howdare you ask that? Even if we did know anything we wouldn't tell you! Not after what you've done. Leave now Albus." Dumbledore stared in disbelief at Molly, he was even more shocked when Arthur approached calmly from behind and laid a supportive hand on his wife's shoulder.

Dumbledore nodded in defeat and turned to leave. Just before he apparated he looked back at the fuming Weasley matriarch. "I've called an emergency Order meeting. Two hours, we'll be discussing this issue." Without waiting for a reply Dumbledore disappeared with a pop.

Break

11 PM Greenwich Mean Time the previous night...

Harry and Lily met silently in the kitchen of Grimmauld place. Lily looked questioningly at Harry who held up a finger to signal patience. A minute later a beautiful red and gold phoenix burst into existence carrying a trunk in its talons. It landed lightly and a second later Ginny appeared immediately finding a home in Harry's waiting arms.

Lily smiled kindly at the pair before speaking quietly. "We have to hurry, I told Elizabeth we'd be there for dinner."

Harry and Ginny nodded before breaking apart and transforming into their phoenix forms. Ginny moved to Lily's shoulder and settled gripping her shoulders lightly. Lily gripped one trunk tightly while Harry landed on the other one picking it up easily. With little fanfare the three disappeared in a flash of fire leaving the kitchen of Grimmauld place empty.

Break

6 PM Eastern Standard Time

Though Central Park was still packed with people no one noticed when two beautiful birds and a red haired woman appeared in a burst of fire behind a large boulder. Seconds later Harry and Ginny had returned to their normal states. Lily quickly shrunk their luggage and placed it carefully in her pocket.

"Come on, we should get a taxi, Central Park isn't close to Elizabeth's apartment." Lily said as she led the others onto one of the paths heading out of the park. Ginny had never been in a muggle city before and Harry had only seen the muggle side of London very few times. Therefore both were a little overwhelmed by the massive amount of people out enjoying the beautiful summer evening.

The sun had set low enough that the buildings cast long deep shadows covering most of the north to south avenues in shadow. The park however still experienced long rays of sunlight through the gaps in the buildings alternately bathing some areas in light and others in shadow. The affect was beautiful but neither had the time to take in the massive trees and sights around them, they were much too busy trying to keep up with Lily as she expertly made her way through the crowds.

Harry and Ginny began gathering annoyed looks when they finally reached the streets, they never realized it was because they paused to apologize every time they bumped into someone. The two finally caught up with Lily as she stopped at a corner to wave down a taxi. It was only a few minutes before one of the yellow cars pulled to a stop in front of them. Lily ushered the two into the taxi and then climbed in after them.

"Where to?" The man looked over his shoulder through the Plexiglas window.

"West 28th St. between Ninth and Tenth Ave." The cabby nodded and the taxi jerked back into the flow of traffic.

Harry and Ginny pushed against the window of the taxi trying in vain to see the tops of the skyscrapers around them. The cabby smiled kindly in the rear view mirror as Harry and Ginny ohh'd and ahh'd as they passed some of the nicer buildings. On a whim he made an unnecessary turn and took a slightly longer route.

"We'll pass through Times Square soon." The cabby said as even Lily turned curiously to look out the window. A second later the traffic on Seventh Avenue dumped them out into the center of Times Square.

(A/N Just a note, some of these things were not opened or built in 1995, I'm just too lazy to look up stuff like that so we're going with the stuff currently in Times Square.)

Harry pointed at the giant Toys "R" Us as the shutters over the main window shifted revealing the Ferris Wheel inside. Ginny pointed excitedly to the Virgin Mobile Megastore as the crowds rushed in and out. Lily gazed longingly as the many signs proclaiming which shows were currently playing on Broadway. Despite the fact that the sun was still up the entire area was already bathed in the glow from the millions of electric lights around the square.

Suddenly all attention in the car shifted as Lily began giggling hysterically and pointing to something outside. Harry and Ginny moved to see where she was pointing. In the center of Times Square on one of the small areas of sidewalk between the convergence of Seventh Avenue and Broadway, stood an almost totally naked man. The only clothes he had was a cowboy hat and a pair of red, white, and blue underpants. He was holding a guitar and posing for pictures with passing tourists. A second later he turned and everyone in the cab could see the words Naked Cowboy tattooed across the back of his underpants.

Harry and Ginny lost control almost immediately and began laughing uncontrollably. The cabby who was used to this by now smirked in amusement as the family behind him continued to laugh gleefully. A few minutes later the cab left Times Square and continued down Seventh Avenue.

As they approached 33rd St. the cabby glanced up in the rearview mirror and spoke again. "Penn Station and Madison Square Garden are coming up on the right." Harry and Ginny moved to look out the window and saw the giant black circular building appear as they moved around the corner. A giant poster for an upcoming movie hung down the side of the building.

A few minutes later they turned west onto 28th Street and came to a stop in the middle of the block between Ninth and Tenth avenues. While Lily handled the fare Harry and Ginny walked up onto the sidewalk looking carefully at the different addresses. They easily spotted the building Elizabeth had described in one of her letters and once Lily was done with the cabby they headed towards it.

Harry was the first one there and looked quickly at the list of names. He paused in confusion as he found the only Elizabeth on the list. He looked questioningly to his mother as she approached.

"Mum, the only Elizabeth on here is Elizabeth Black."

Lily's eyebrows rose slightly as she glanced at the list of residents over Harry's shoulder. "Apparently she never reverted to her maiden name."

This only caused Harry and Ginny's eyebrows to disappear into their hairlines as their eyes tried unsuccessfully to escape from their head. "She was married to Sirius?" Both said at the same time.

"Yes, but last I'd heard they were filing for divorce. I never did find out exactly what went wrong between them." Lily tilted her head and looked at the name curiously for a second before leaning forward and pressing the buzzer. A second later a feminine voice came from the small speaker next to the buzzers.

"Hello?"

"Lizzy, it's Lil's sorry we're a little late."

"Lily! One minute I'll buzz you in." A second later the door opened with a click and the three walked in quickly shutting the door behind them.

They'd just turned towards the elevators when the one closest to them opened. Inside was a tall blonde haired, blue eyed woman. Her hair came down to about the middle of her back. She was fit and walked off the elevator with a subtle grace. The second her eyes saw Lily, Harry, and Ginny a large smile broke out across her face.

"Lily!" She sprinted the rest of the way across the lobby and hugged her friend tightly to her. Lily laughed joyfully and hugged her back. A

second later they broke apart and Elizabeth turned to Harry. "Oh Harry, look how much you've grown! I haven't seen you since you were a baby." Before Harry could say anything Elizabeth had pulled him into a bone crushing hug.

"Nice to see you again too, erm Mrs. Black?" Elizabeth stiffened slightly as she hugged Harry. She pulled back holding him at arms length.

"Harry please call me Liz. Mrs. Black reminds me too much of Sirius' mother. A very horrible woman." Liz shivered slightly at the mere memory before turning to the final member of the group. "You must be the amazing and wonderful Ginny I've heard so much about."

Ginny had the grace to smile and blush profusely under the kind words. "I don't know who's been writing to you, but I wouldn't say amazing and wonderful."

Liz smiled at the girls modesty. "How about beautiful and compassionate?"

Ginny pretended to think hard about it for a second before responding. "I suppose that would be acceptable." Both women managed to keep straight faces for a second before bursting out into hysterical laughter.

"Well it's nice to see all of you. Come on I'll show you to my apartment."

Break

Dumbledore sat at the head of the extended kitchen table in Grimmauld Place. For the past ten minutes Order members had been slowly filtering into the room. The last to arrive were Molly and Arthur. As they took their seats Dumbledore rose, immediately all conversation stopped and the entire room turned to focus on him.

"Greetings! I've called this meeting today because during the night, Lily and Harry Potter along with Ginevra Weasley disappeared." Shocked gasps and hushed whispering immediately filled the room, a loud cough from Dumbledore however, immediately silenced everyone. "I do not believe they were kidnapped. It is imperative

though that we find them and if we are unable to bring them back safely then we must provide protection for them."

Many heads began to turn subtly to Molly and Arthur who both seemed unaffected by this news. Neither moved to support Dumbledore's plans and instead stared emotionlessly at the Headmaster. Before the Headmaster could continue however Sirius stood gaining everyone's attention.

"I think I might know where they went." Every eye in the room fixed on him and he squirmed under the attention. Finally Moody spoke up.

"Well, out with it Black!"

Sirius paused and it looked like he was trying to choose the right words to say. "I can't tell you where they might be. I can go check though, and I'd like to bring Tonks with me. Her special skills could be useful."

Several people immediately rose to protest but were cut short when Dumbledore raised his hand in a silencing motion. "Why are you unable to tell us Sirius?"

"I promised someone I would never reveal their location. I don't plan to break that promise. I'm sorry. Tonks is the only person I think she would trust with the information."

Dumbledore's eyes lit up in understanding as he nodded slowly. "Alright, Ms. Tonks would you accompany Sirius to his destination." The pink haired girl looked up eagerly ready to go on an adventure with her cousin.

"Sure! I've got nothing better to do." Was the auror in trainings only response.

"For now I think we should see if anything comes from Sirius' lead. If it's a dead end we will widen the search." Dumbledore said.

Professor McGonagall stood from her place a second later gaining everyone's attention. "What about You-Know-Who Albus?"

Dumbledore frowned momentarily before shaking his head. "I do not believe Voldemort is strong enough right now to track the Potters and Ms. Weasley." This seemed to satisfy the group as the meeting began to slowly break apart.

A few minutes later Sirius appeared next to Tonks, grabbing her just in time to prevent her tripping over a chair. "Get a weeks worth of clothes and supplies then meet me at my apartment in an hour." Sirius whispered quietly to the Metamorphmagus before turning to his friends.

James approached Sirius looking very agitated. "Sirius where did they go?"

"I'm sorry James, I can't tell you."

"Why not?"

"I promised her I wouldn't." Sirius whispered it quietly, but James heard the words and understanding flashed in his eyes.

"You're protecting her! Sirius she left you!"

Sirius flinched under the words but remained strong in his resolve. "I know why she did. I also know that this may be my second chance. Don't worry James I'll try to convince Lily to come back here."

James nodded in defeat as Sirius disappeared through the floo. James turned back to the main room to find Dumbledore was the only person remaining in the kitchen.

"James I'll need your help. I want to plan special training sessions this year for Harry. We need to prepare him for any challenges he might face."

James rolled his eyes but joined the Headmaster at the kitchen table regardless and began to help in the planning.

A/N

I have a small announcement to make, my chapters will be slowing down a lot. I'm sorry for it. My professors decided that since we're reaching the halfway point in the semester they should start



assigning papers by the dozen. I'd be perfectly happy to never see a keyboard or pen for the rest of my life. To make matters worst another plot has found its way into my head and whenever i try to plan this story out that one pops up and i'll plan parts of that before i realize i was working on this one. I think i'll need to write some of that other plot down just to get it out of my head so i can concentrate on this one.

A side note, i don't know if there are any apartment buildings on that block. I just know it's in Chelsea and Chelsea has some nice middle class/upper middle class apartments.

The next chapter which i hope i'll have by at least next friday will be Chapter 18: NYC Part 2/ Sirius vs Elizabeth

Reviews are awesome! We hit 700!

P.S. If you've never had your picture taken with the Naked Cowboy, you haven't lived.

## Chapter 18: New York City Part 2

Harry and Ginny woke up early the next morning. They'd spent the last night talking about what they planned to do during their stay in New York City. Afterwards they'd retired to their rooms, something they didn't really like but knew Lily would force on them. The general plan for the first day was to visit Central Park and then return to Times Square. Lily had told them in no uncertain terms that she would be accompanying them everywhere. Elizabeth had agreed to meet them on her lunch break, she worked as a department manager in one of the local advertising companies.

As it was a nice day, Harry and Ginny decided to walk back to Central Park. Elizabeth had supplied them with a pocket map of the city and the subway system, along with a brief lesson in the simplicity of the New York City street system. So around ten Harry, Ginny, and Lily confidently set out for Central Park.

Two blocks later they turned around and started heading in the right direction.

Since Harry and Ginny had never really been in a heavily populated city before, they took their time making their way there. They stopped often to look at street performers, avoid cars, look at the buildings around them in awe, and generally play the amazed tourist. Around 33rd Street they crossed over from Ninth Avenue to Seventh Avenue. In doing so they passed Madison Square Garden/ Penn Station and Ginny was entranced by the large TV showing clips of the previous nights Knicks game.

"Harry look at that!" Ginny said as she pointed excitedly at the TV.

Harry watched the TV for a few seconds before returning his attention to the street in front of him. He started to walk forward when his hand which had been intertwined with Ginny's pulled taught. He looked back to see her still staring in wonder at the almost ten foot tall TV.

"Ginny come on we need to keep moving." Seeing that she still refused to budge, Harry huffed in frustration and going back took her shoulders and began guiding her away from the TV.

"Harry what are you doing?"

"Keeping you moving away from that thing, you were just standing there."

"But Harry, it was so cool, I've never seen anything like that before!"

"I know but you can't just stare it all day. Besides there's so much more to see!" Ginny finally acquiesced and returned to holding Harry's hand as they continued onto Seventh Avenue and then up the street.

A few blocks later they entered Times Square for the first time on foot. The sights and sounds easily overloaded their senses as they tried to take in everything at once. Lily who was looking on from behind them was briefly worried that they might hurt their necks since their heads were swiveling around so quickly. The expressions on their faces were so priceless she couldn't help taking a picture with the camera she'd bought before they left.

Lily helped the two continue walking as they tried to absorb all the things going on around them. Cars whizzed by as thousands of people walked, ran, rode their bicycles, or in the case of two police officers rode their horses, through the crowded crossroads of the world. Harry's gaze flicked between the dozens of billboards proclaiming new Broadway plays, movies, and even a TV show or two. Ginny's eyes were fixed on the giant Toys 'R Us across the street. She could see the Ferris Wheel inside spinning slowly and wondered what it was.

"Harry what is that?" Ginny exclaimed excitedly pointing to the Ferris Wheel.

"It's a Ferris Wheel, you can ride it and it goes around in circles. You want to go in and see if we can get on." Harry didn't think Ginny's facial expression could change so quickly, but in the blink of an eye she went from astonished, to overwhelmingly excited.

"Can we Harry? That looks like so much fun!" Ginny said as she looked hopefully from Harry to Lily.

"I don't see why not, we have the entire day after all." Lily said happily as Ginny grabbed Harry's hand and started pulling him towards the nearest crosswalk.

Once across the street Harry helped Ginny through the large spinning doors that led into the building. Ginny only had a second to look at the Ferris Wheel in awe before a person dressed in an employee shirt walked over with a camera.

"Would you like a picture?" The woman asked cheerfully as she held up the camera strapped around her neck. Shrugging Harry nodded and put his arm around Ginny's shoulders as she wrapped an arm around his waist. Lily smiled and backed out of the picture as the employee brought the camera to her face.

"On three! One... Two... Three!" As the woman said three Harry turned and placed a chaste kiss on Ginny's cheek causing her to smile even more brightly as the flash went off. "You two lovebirds can pick up your pictures at the both near the elevators." The picture woman said as she moved towards the next couple.

"Come on Harry lets go find our picture." Ginny said as she excitedly pulled Harry towards the elevators. Lily followed along behind them laughing merrily at the girls excitement.

When Lily finally caught up with the other two they were already paying for the type of picture they wanted. The employee behind the desk had brought their picture up on the main monitor, and Lily saw several people gathered around the desk smiling and pointing to it.

Just as Harry and Ginny were getting ready to walk away with their picture another guy nearby spotted Harry and jokingly called out: "Way to make the rest of us look bad, man!"

Harry laughed playfully and called back: "Seemed like a good idea at the time!"

Ginny smiled playfully at Harry then started pulling him towards the escalator leading down to the Ferris Wheel. Lily managed to keep up with them and ended up behind them on the ride down. Once the couple had gotten their tickets, Lily left them on the line and went back up to the second floor. She waited with her camera near the balcony overlooking the Ferris Wheel. Harry and Ginny ended up in the Barbie car much to Harry's chagrin.

Lily happily took pictures of the two as they went around in circles. Though after the first time around they seemed much too focused on each other to notice Lily, but she really didn't mind. Once off the ride Lily met them near the escalators and followed them up to the third floor. They got a surprise as they stepped off the escalator and Ginny shrieked as they turned the corner.

Across from them near the back corner was a twenty foot Tyrannosaurus Rex roaring and moving its head from side to side. Harry and Lily were able to calm Ginny down quickly explaining to her that it wasn't real, and simply muggle technology. Shortly after that incident they found Candyland. Ginny and Harry quickly found themselves in a sugary sweet filled heaven.

Break

An entire roll of film and an hour later, Harry, Ginny, and Lily finally found their way out of the massive Toys 'R Us. Harry and Ginny each had a bag almost overflowing with candy and a toy or two that had caught their interests. Lily led them away from Times Square and towards their original destination of Central Park.

Several blocks later, they finally reached one of the many entrances to Central Park. Ten minutes later, Harry and Ginny were seated on top of a large rock looking out over the park. The trees prevented them from seeing too far, but they still had an open view of the playground at the base of the three story rock. Ginny was curled up next to Harry, her head resting peacefully on his shoulder. Lily gave them some privacy and stood on the opposite side of the rock watching them.

Neither was quite sure what they were supposed to do. They knew the phoenixes simply wouldn't appear since there were muggles everywhere, but they'd said to come here. So they waited.

Break

Lily glanced at her watch again. They'd been here almost two hours, and neither Harry nor Ginny had moved much, except to keep themselves comfortable. She'd made herself comfortable and found a bench nearby to sit on. She'd pulled a book out almost an hour ago and had been contentedly reading while occasionally glancing at Harry and Ginny.

As she glanced at her watch again someone sat down on the bench next to her with a heavy sigh. "You really need to get a cellphone Lils, or at least a pager. I've been looking for you three for over an hour."

Lily smiled sheepishly at Elizabeth, who was still in the casual dress suit she used for work. "Sorry Lizzy, we haven't been doing much." Lily glanced at her best friend suspiciously. "How long is your lunch break anyway?"

Now it was Elizabeth's turn to smile sheepishly. "I kind of took the afternoon off. I'm high enough in the chain of command that I can do that. I did it for my last date actually." Elizabeth smiled as she lost herself in thought.

Lily frowned slightly, but her friend didn't notice. "So how was your, er date?"

Elizabeth immediately started giggling quietly to herself. "Oh, it was a disaster. The poor guy brought me to a sea food place, which as you know I'm allergic to almost everything in there. Then he tried to fix it by finding some quiet sit down restaurant over by Times Square. Only when we started eating he had an allergic reaction to his pasta. His face blew up like a balloon. I was trying so hard not to laugh at him, but he'd been such a boring oaf I couldn't hold it in."

By the end of the story even Lily was smiling. Then she frowned, knowing the subject she was about to bring up would make the situation a little bit tenser than she would like. "Lizzy, you know I'm your friend. But, I really think-"

"No Lily! Don't even say it! I will not give that cheating sack of shit another chance and that's final! I hate him." Elizabeth had grown red in the face and she looked at Lily as if daring her to continue the conversation.

"Ok Liz, I just thought things might have changed since then." Lily mumbled as she sighed in defeat.

"They haven't, and I can guarantee he hasn't."

The conversation died down and Lily attempted to return to her book. Liz looked over towards where Harry and Ginny were still sitting. It took several seconds before she realized they weren't moving a muscle.

"How long can they sit like that? They're not even moving."

Lily looked up from her book and finally noticed the rigid position the two teens had taken since she last looked. "I think that might just be what they've been waiting for. I'm not sure why we're here, but Harry and Ginny have a reason. Maybe they'll tell us later."

Keeping a close eye on the two in case of trouble, Lily and Elizabeth began talking about everything that had happened since the last time they saw each other.

Break

Ginny was practically asleep on Harry's shoulder. Every couple of seconds he mentally called her name and pinched her shoulder, just to make sure she stayed awake. Now however, even he was fighting to stay awake. Despite the uncomfortable rocky ground, and the fact that his legs had gone to sleep twenty minutes ago, Harry was still being overcome by drowsiness.

Less than five minutes later his head was resting peacefully against Ginny's.

Even though both of them had their eyes closed, it didn't really make a difference. They found themselves still sitting on top of the rock, only the uncomfortable feelings in their legs was gone. It only took a second for them to realize they were totally alone, prompting them to realize that this must be a vision. As soon as that thought crossed their minds, Razzak and Lisna appeared in a flash of fire.

While Lisna immediately settled in Ginny's lap trilling happily, Razzak landed in front of the two teens piercing them with his gaze. 'Greetings our Chosen. We're glad you could come here.'

"Why was it so important we come here?" Ginny asked him as she lovingly straightened the feathers on Lisna's head.

'To tell you everything.'

Harry and Ginny both glanced at each other and raised their eyebrows. "Everything?"

'Yes Everything.' Harry and Ginny turned in surprise to look at Lisna. She rarely spoke, so when she did they knew it was important. Razzak made a sound, almost like he was laughing.

'There was a prophecy made long ago to the Phoenix Council. I warn you now Harry, this is not to be confused with another prophecy made just before you were born by some drugged up quack.' Razzak said, though Harry just nodded, not entirely sure what he was talking about.

'The prophecy that was made to the council was this: Two shall become one. When the Darkness shrouds the world, the Chosen of the Light shall rise. Together the Chosen shall stand, but separate and they shall fall. Two shall become one, or eternal Darkness will rule.' By this point both Harry and Ginny's mouths hung open in shock. Neither blinked for a second, but Razzak didn't give them the chance to fully recover before continuing.

'We believe this speaks of you two. Your souls have become as close to one soul as is possible. Love, the basis of all things of the Light protected you Harry. You were Chosen for this path, and then you chose Ginny. The two of you together are the hope for the world. I'm sorry we have to lay this on your shoulders now, but the Darkness approaches and the time for you to face your destiny comes with it.'

"But the Prophecy said as long as we're together we can win, so what do we have to worry about?" Ginny asked, though she'd sensed Harry thinking the same thing.

'No!' Once again Lisna was speaking to them. 'This was a prophecy! They are not guaranteed to come true. It never said you would defeat the coming Darkness! It just said that without each other you would fall. If you let false confidence and arrogance guide your actions, then you shall fail.'

Harry and Ginny both sat quietly letting everything they'd heard process through their minds. Finally something snagged in Harry's



mind and he looked in horror at Ginny. "I'm sorry! I'm so sorry! Ginny I didn't mean to drag you into this, if I'd known I nev-"

His crazed apologies were stopped instantly as Ginny pressed her lips to his. When she pulled back she made sure to cover his mouth with her hand so he couldn't interrupt her. "Harry, stop thinking that. You didn't know and I'd rather be with you now, then just some Daniel fan girl. Besides if you hadn't 'chosen' me, who would you have chosen? Hermione?" Ginny could only giggle as Harry's face paled and he gagged involuntarily.

Once he'd recovered Harry smiled sheepishly and kissed Ginny tenderly on the lips. "I love you. You always know what to say."

"Only because I know you so well." Ginny said as she smiled back at him.

'As much as I hate to break this moment up, I feel we need to.' Razzak said as Harry and Ginny started to kiss again. They both looked up at him in mock annoyance before he continued. 'We've managed to, er, convince many of the other magical races to remain neutral in the coming war. Only the most radical vampires and werewolves will join Voldemort. But, Voldemort is not the only problem. When you defeat him, you must push for reforms in the Ministry.'

"They need it." Harry said before he could stop himself.

'Yes they do. Unlike the muggles, the wizarding world never went through much of a Renaissance or Industrial period. Wizards today are still living as they did hundreds of years ago. Muggles are surpassing wizards in almost everything. Innovation has died in wizarding kind, and so has liberalism. When you defeat Voldemort, you must call for reforms and equality.'

"Of course we will." Ginny and Harry both said without pause. They knew from experience how stagnant their kind had become in everything. Muggleborns, vampires, werewolves, centaurs, goblins, and every other kind of magical race were faced with overwhelming prejudice. It needed to change.

'Good, now onto the fun stuff. We also called you here because we have a project for you. The Founders have taught you admirably, but

you need to practice with someone actually alive. When you return to Hogwarts, an old friend of ours will contact you. Trust him.'

"Do we know him?" Harry and Ginny's curiosity had been triggered and now they wanted to find any information they could on their new instructor.

'You have met him once before Harry. We won't give you his name, but you will recognize him when he comes.'

"Alright, so anything else we should know about?" Ginny asked curiously.

'No. But you must remain vigilant. This summer will most likely be peaceful, perhaps even the beginning of the school year. When Voldemort finds out he has lost the support of the vampires and werewolves, it will enrage him. With all but a few ignorant of his return, his first strike will be devastating. You must be ready for it, and you must be prepared for the losses.'

"We understand. We'll be ready when he attacks." Harry said as he gripped Ginny's hand tightly. She had a lot more to lose than him in this war.

'That's all we ask.'

'Harry, Ginny.' The two looked at Lisna who was staring intently at them. 'Dumbledore preaches nonviolence. Normally I would agree, but if you kill in defense of the innocent, you kill with a much better purpose than those who seek to torture and maim. Believe in each other and love with all your heart. You will win this war.' Lisna's voice was filled with conviction as she looked between the two before her.

As Harry and Ginny nodded firmly to her the world around them began to fade, and then they were blinking their eyes open as they looked around in the late afternoon sunlight.

Break

A week later Lily, with the help of Elizabeth, had secured four tickets to the matinee performance of *Les Misérables*. Elizabeth took off of work, something she'd been doing quite a bit of over the last week

and happily accompanied them to the show. They'd seen many of the sights, the Empire State Building, Little Italy, Chinatown, Rockefeller Center, and Madison Square Garden. (Just to name a few.) They'd also spent a lot of time in Central Park exploring the many different sites within.

The play was amazing, and after a nice dinner at Planet Hollywood, the four returned to Elizabeth's apartment. Ginny had a bag with the soundtrack and a t-shirt from the play. The rest had small mementos they'd picked up from street vendors. When they reached the steps leading to Elizabeth's apartment, though they received a surprise.

Sitting on the stoop was a black haired man and a pink haired woman. Both looked up when the group in front of them appeared at the base of the steps. The man opened his mouth to say something when Elizabeth cut him off.

"I don't know how you found us Black, but I'm giving you ten seconds to disappear before I rip you apart." Elizabeth's voice was more like a low snarl, and Sirius's mouth immediately snapped shut. He looked pleadingly at Lily, who didn't meet his gaze.

"I'm sorry Sirius, it's her house. I suggest you leave."

"I came to talk to you Lizzy. Please just listen to me for once!" The woman behind him opened her mouth to say something but he held up a hand stopping her. "Not now Tonks."

"I said I don't want to see you Black! I don't need to listen to whatever lies you've concocted! I know what I saw!" Elizabeth was yelling now, and the few people walking down the street began to look at her curiously.

"You didn't see anything! Nothing happened! I just woke up literally two seconds before you got there! I don't know how she ended up there!" Sirius was yelling now, and Lily was subtly trying to move them inside, no one followed her.

"Oh really! You don't know how some bimbo ended up in bed with you? Did she just appear out of thin air?" Elizabeth's face was red now as she screamed at an equally red faced Sirius.

"I don't know! I guarantee I didn't put her there! I love you! Why on earth would I sleep with someone like her when I had the perfect woman already!" This seemed to make Elizabeth falter for a second because she paused momentarily and looked at Sirius in confusion.

When she finally spoke her voice was quiet once again and she glared at Sirius. "How do I know I can trust you Sirius? It's been almost fourteen years. The last time I saw you, you were naked in bed with an equally naked Rita freaking Skeeter! Give me one reason why I shouldn't hex you all the way back to England."

Harry, Ginny, and Tonks' mouths all fell open as the reason between Elizabeth and Sirius' split finally came to light. Tonks unfortunately didn't manage to keep quiet and blurted out. "You slept with Rita Skeeter!" Immediately everyone turned to glare at her as her hand flew to cover her mouth and she grinned sheepishly. "Sorry."

"No I didn't! I've told you a hundred times the last thing I remember was shutting the window and laying down to go to sleep. The next thing I know I'm waking up to you screaming, then you hex me, and I don't see you again for fourteen years! I trusted you in everything Liz, obviously you couldn't even trust me enough to let me explain." Sirius looked heartbroken and without waiting turned on the spot and disappeared with a pop.

Elizabeth looked down at the ground guiltily and Harry saw a tear roll down her cheek. Lily put her arm around Elizabeth's shoulders and helped her up the stairs to the door, past a stunned Tonks, and inside. Harry and Ginny followed. Tonks stood on the stoop completely lost, she wasn't quite sure what to do.

A second later though Ginny stuck her head out the door. "Lily says your welcome to join us for dinner, er Tonks."

Tonks smiled gratefully and followed Ginny into the building.

Break

Two weeks later. Approximately July 20th.

"My Lord, I bring urgent news from the werewolves."

Voldemort sneered as the savage form of Fenrir Greyback submissively knelt before him and kissed the hem of his robes. "What is it Fenrir? I don't have much time to worry about the little needs of the werewolves."

Fenrir bristled at the intended insult but wisely remained quiet. "My Lord, the other werewolves have decided to remain neutral. I convinced only about two dozen to join us. I'm sorry."

Voldemort narrowed his eyes in cold fury before raising his wand. "Crucio!"

Fenrir screamed in pain under the curse and after two long minutes sagged to the ground as Voldemort removed it. "I expect better results Greyback. I'll give you one more chance. Convince them to join us or tell them to expect a slow painful death."

Fenrir nodded and scurried away into the shadows of the room. As he did Lucius Malfoy stepped forward and regally bowed before his master kissing the hem of his robes. "My Lord. It's just been confirmed to us that Harry Potter, his mother, and his girlfriend have all disappeared. I don't believe they are in hiding with the others."

Voldemort sat back in thought as he steepled his fingers and looked out over the tips. "As much of a good opportunity this presents," He began after a long pause. "We simply don't have the resources to devote to a search now. Either way I have special plans for him later on."

Lucius nodded his head subserviently, bowed once more and also faded back into the shadows.

Break

July 31st

"Do we have to leave tomorrow Harry?" Ginny had been pleading with her other half all week to prolong their vacation just a little longer.

"We have to Gin, we've been gone long enough." They'd been away over a month now and even though Tonks had been staying with them the last few weeks, Harry still had an unknown desire to return

home. Sirius hadn't reappeared since that day, and Harry feared he may have done something incredibly stupid.

"Fine, I do miss my family I suppose." Ginny smiled slyly though and looked up at him through her eyelashes. "That doesn't mean we can't enjoy our last day here, and it is your birthday after all..." She let the sentence hang before sashaying towards the guest room they'd been secretly sharing.

Harry was supposed to be sleeping on the sofa, but almost every night after everyone else was asleep he'd sneak into Ginny's room and they'd fall asleep peacefully in each others arms. He was almost positive his mother and Elizabeth had figured out what they were doing, but neither had even hinted at it, so they blissfully continued with their sleeping arrangements.

Harry was hypnotized by the way she moved her hips as she walked towards her room, and almost before she'd reached the door he was sprinting after her. A second later their lips were locked together and the bedroom door was thrown shut as they collapsed onto the bed.

(a/n Just thought I'd mention they didn't have sex, you dirty minded people)

An hour later Harry and Ginny emerged from the room, lips swollen, hair tousled, and lopsided grins plastered on both their faces. They'd only just opened the door though when a bright flash went off in their eyes and Tonks yelled happily.

"I got it! Oh you should have seen your faces! I'm going to enlarge this and put it up all over headquarters! No better yet I'm going to blackmail you with it. I'm sure you wouldn't want this picture falling into the hands of a certain someone's brothers." Tonks waggled her eyebrows as Harry and Ginny attempted to glare at her and blush at the same time.

"Alright Tonks you've had your fun." Harry said trying to sound serious but failing miserably.

"Oh I know, but I needed to distract you somehow."

"Distract me from what?" At that moment Elizabeth and Lily entered the room holding a birthday cake in the shape of a lightning bolt between them.

"SURPRISE!" All four women shouted as Harry stared at the cake in shock.

"T-thanks everyone. This is so cool!" Harry couldn't help but grin happily as the other four sung him happy birthday cheerfully.

"Come on love, blow out your candles!" Ginny was almost as excited as Harry was.

A very filling cake later, Harry sat down on the couch as four presents were shoved into his lap. He looked at them carefully before picking up a bright pink one, guessing who it was from. Inside he found an aurors training manual, with tabs and handwritten notes.

"Wow thanks Tonks! What's all the writing for though?"

Tonks smiled happily at him. "Oh that's my personal notes from auror training. You know tips to perform the spell easier, counter spells, thing to help me remember how to do that stuff."

Harry looked back down at the book smiling and nodding his head in understanding. He flipped to a random page and noticed a small conversation had been hastily scribbled in the margin. He looked playfully up at Tonks.

"So who's Jackson, and why does he have the sexiest butt ever?" Tonks immediately turned a brilliant shade of red and made to grab the book away from Harry who pulled it out of reach just in time. "Nope it's mine now Tonks. You have the picture I have the book. I'd say we're even."

Tonks muttered some very inappropriate curses under her breathe as Harry reached for the next present. It was from Elizabeth. Inside was a dragon scale wand holster, that Harry picked up carefully turning it over in his hand. Elizabeth smiled at the look of awe on Harry's face.

"It's specially charmed to prevent your wand from being removed by anyone but yourself. Not even a stunner or disarming charm can get it out of the holster." Elizabeth supplied happily.

"Wow, thank Liz. This is so cool!" Harry said as he reverently strapped the holster to his forearm. He realized that it also doubled as a small bracer which could absorb or deflect some spells, if he failed to get a shield up in time.

Still eyeing his holster happily, Harry picked up his next present. This one was from Lily. Inside the wrapping paper was a thick photo album. Right on the cover was a picture of Harry and Ginny on top of the Empire State Building kissing. Harry opened it to find all the pictures Lily had taken over the vacation inside.

"That for both you and Ginny. I figured it could be your first family album." Lily smiled as Harry and Ginny's faces instantly lit up. Harry was speechless as Ginny who been sitting next to him moved even closer to look at the pictures over his shoulder.

Finally he reached the end of the album and looked up at his mum. "Thanks mum. This means more to us than you could know." Harry said, Lily was positive he was fighting back tears.

"Look at the last page." Lily shared a mischievous smile with Elizabeth as Harry flipped to the very back.

On the last page was a picture of Harry in a t-shirt and his boxers sound asleep. Next to him on the bed Ginny slept with her head on his chest, using one of his bigger t-shirts as a nightgown. The sheet was tangled between and over them with their feet sticking out the bottom of it. The real Harry and Ginny instantly blushed and looked nervously at Lily and Elizabeth.

Lily and Elizabeth were red in the face and looked very angry. Harry tried to subtly position himself in front of Ginny. This seemed to trigger something and both Lily and Elizabeth began laughing hysterically. Tonks snapped another picture of Harry and Ginny's faces before joining in on the laughter. Harry and Ginny laughed nervously before putting the album down carefully on the coffee table.



While the other three were still laughing hysterically Harry picked up Ginny's gift. Inside he found a box of dog biscuits, which caused Ginny to giggle quietly to herself. Next to the dog treats was a quaffle. It was signed by every member of the New York Divebombers Quidditch team. Harry and Ginny had seen a few matches, their stadium was magically enchanted inside of Yankee Stadium.

"Wow Ginny! How'd you get this?" Ginny smiled proudly at the look of joy on Harry's face as he turned the quaffle over in his hands looking at the different signatures. "Wait a minute. These ones are from the Pride of Portree team too!"

It was a well known fact that Harry's favorite team was the Pride of Portree. So when they'd learned the Divebombers would be playing the Prides in a goodwill game between America and Britain, they of course went. Portree had won by ten points after an amazing catch by the seeker.

"Remember when I went to the bathroom, and was gone almost twenty minutes. You know after the match. I went to get the signatures instead." Ginny said smiling triumphantly.

"I love you so much." Was all Harry could say before he captured her lips with his.

Lily, Elizabeth, and Tonks giggled quietly before moving quietly into the kitchen away from the snogging couple.

Break

Remus stepped out of the fireplace in The Hogs Head. He wiped the soot off his robes before looking around. The place was almost empty except for three figures. One was off in a corner by himself and Remus didn't even bother with him. At the bar however, Sirius was passed out drunk.

Sighing Remus walked up to the bar and looked down the pathetic form of his friend. Behind the bar Aberforth continued scrubbing an eternally dirty glass. "Thanks for flooing me Aberforth. How long has he been like this?"

"Two hours, but he's been here since Friday drinking."

Remus' head snapped up as Aberforth smiled sadly. "Friday?"

"Yep, kept talking about some woman. Said she doesn't trust him or something."

Remus sighed and looked back down at the unconscious form of Sirius. "Did he mention a name?"

"Nope. Just kept saying she didn't trust him, of course it took six hours of drinking before he even opened up that much."

Remus nodded as he grabbed one of Sirius' arms and threw it around his shoulder. Sirius stirred at the movement and opened glazed, unfocused eyes. After a second they focused on Remus and he smiled drunkenly.

"Hhhhey Mooony!" He slurred. "When'd you gettt here?" He swiped haphazardly at the air as he hiccupped. "Never -hic- never mind. I was -hic- jus tellin ol Abe -hic- here how she -hic- doesn truss me. -hic-" He paused again, and then grabbed Remus' collar. "You know -hic- you know who I'm talkin abou. -hic- I'm talkin bout -hic- Lizzy! Isn' she purty Mooony?"

"Yes Padfoot she very pretty. Let's concentrate on getting you home though." Remus was struggling towards the fireplace, and the amazingly drunk Sirius wasn't helping much.

"She- hic- is purty!" He said loudly, but then leaned in close to Remus, and in what he thought was a whisper said. "But she doesn trust me!" Then started laughing hysterically.

"Ok Padfoot. Look we're almost there." Remus used his free hand to throw the floo powder into the fireplace, then nearly fell while still trying to support the drunk Sirius. "Grimmauld Place!"

In a flash of green fire Remus and Sirius disappeared leaving the bar quiet once again.

A/N

Yay! Look i'm not dead! Sorry about the huge wait, but school and other stuff got in the way. Surprisingly only two people asked when i was updating... oh well, i'm going to pretend you all missed me.

So i hope you all weren't expecting a lot of fluff, i didn't have time for it. Also you'll notice the rating got bumped up to M. That's permanent, besides the cursing, drinking, and sexual references in this chapter the next one is pretty dark and graphic,(battle scene graphic not sex graphic) so i'm warning you now. I know someone reviewed saying they were reading this with their younger sibling, i'm going to try and make a censored version, that i can send to anyone if they want it.

Tell me what you think of the prophecy.

Thanks for sticking with me through all this. Hopefully the next chapter will be up later this week! Next Chapter: Starting Things off with a Bang!

P.S. I closed the poll in my profile. #1 won, but it's probably going to be the story after next that i write. I thought of one i like a lot more than any of those.

## Chapter 19: Starting things off with a Bang!

"Are you sure?" Harry asked again looking speculatively at Elizabeth.

"For the hundredth time Harry. I'm sure. You're going to need all the help you can get. Besides I miss England." Elizabeth had been adamant on returning with them for the last week, she'd even quit her job.

"Alright. Then are we all ready to go?"

It was around noon on the first of August. They'd be leaving in a few seconds, there was just one small problem left to discuss.

"Tonks, we need to ask you something very important. Can we trust you?" Harry and Ginny were both analyzing the pink haired woman as Harry asked the question.

She looked slightly bewildered for a second before returning their gaze. "Of course, you're like the little brother and sister I never had. Why would you ask that now? I've been living with you for almost a month."

"That's not what we meant. We meant can we trust you to not reveal anything you're about to see to Dumbledore." Ginny asked, Tonks' attention was so fixed on the two teens in front of her she didn't see Lily moving into position behind her.

"I'm still not sure what you're talking about. Why would we want to hide something from Dumbledore?"

"We have a special mode of transportation we don't want anyone to know about, if we can't trust you to not tell Dumbledore, we'll have to stun you for the trip home."

Tonks laughed nervously, but stopped when neither Harry nor Ginny smiled. Ginny looked pointedly over Tonks' shoulder. Tonks turned to find Lily standing behind her with an apologetic smile, her wand aimed at Tonks' back.

"Sorry Tonks." Lily looked very apologetic as the other woman stared at her in shock.

Tonks stared for a second before her shoulders sagged slightly and she nodded glumly. "You might as well stun me. My occlumency shields aren't strong enough to stop Dumbledore."

Harry stood up and caught Tonks as the red light knocked her unconscious. He laid her down on one of the trunks and turned back to the others. "Well, I guess we should go."

The others nodded sadly and Harry and Ginny transformed into their phoenix forms. Elizabeth looked at her apartment one last time before grabbing Ginny's tail feathers, she'd miss it. Then she felt a warm tingling feeling as they disappeared in a burst of fire.

Break

Molly Weasley glanced at the clock on the wall which described all of her family's current activities. She expected to see her husband's hand moving, but instead it was her youngest daughter's. The one currently missing, although the clock had insisted for the last month she was on vacation. Ginny's hand momentarily spun to traveling and then spun again to home.

Molly dropped the dish she'd been cleaning and rushed to the kitchen window. Her heart leapt into her throat as she watched her youngest daughter walk, hand in hand with Harry, out of the forest near their home. Behind them Lily, Tonks, and a woman she didn't recognize followed a few feet behind them. Molly wasted no more time before flying out of the house.

Break

Ginny and Harry watched nervously as Molly burst through the door to the Burrow, nearly running across the yard to where they stood. Neither were sure what to expect from the Weasley matriarch, and were a little surprised when instead of yelling she pulled both of them into a bone crushing hug.

"Thank goodness you're both alright. I've been so worried!" Molly pulled back and held them both at arms length. "Oh you've both grown so much in the past month!"

It was true, both had experienced a growth spurt and had grown about four or five inches in the last six months. They were both still

fit and had toned muscles, mostly from all the workouts the Founder's put them through. Ginny's hair had grown out and when she let it hang loose, it reached almost to the small of her back. Harry's hair had also grown out and now hung down over his ears. Both wore muggle clothing, Ginny in a denim skirt that reached to just above her knees and a yellow blouse, Harry in a pair of shorts and a Pride of Portree t-shirt. Both had also continued to fill out, as any normal teenager would.

"You're not mad?" Ginny hopefully threw out the question.

Mrs. Weasley's smile didn't falter and she happily answered. "Of course I am. I'm just so happy to have you back for now that I won't start yelling until tomorrow."

Harry and Ginny both grimaced at the thought but, their smiles returned shortly. Maybe they could make Mrs. Weasley forget her anger.

A second after that thought, though Molly looked past them at the other three adults. "Oh Lily dear, so good to see you." She hugged Lily then turned to Elizabeth. "I don't think we've had the pleasure."

"Oh Molly, this is Elizabeth Black, my best friend from Hogwarts." Molly's smile faltered slightly as she looked at Elizabeth.

"Oh. I've heard so much about you." There was a note of forced cheerfulness in Mrs. Weasley's voice and everyone who knew her looked at her questioningly. "Lily-dear can I speak to you in private?"

Lily furrowed her brow in concern, but nodded and walked off to the side with Mrs. Weasley. Harry, Ginny, and Elizabeth watched them go, before they were interrupted by something similar to a battle cry. Out of the door to the Burrow, four angry redheads charged towards the small group. Ginny immediately pushed Harry behind her and leveled her wand at her approaching brothers.

"Freeze! Take another step and I'll hex all four of you!" Her brothers slowed their advance but still proceeded slowly towards them.

"Ginny this is for your own good. As your older brother's it's our duty to kill him for kidnapping you!" This was of course Ron speaking. The twins and Bill glanced sideways at him in confusion.

"Ron, we already know she went willingly, this is in defense of her honor." Bill whispered out the side of his mouth.

Ron looked confused for a second before turning back to Ginny and Harry. "That's right we have to defend your honor! We won't let anyone steal our sister's honor before she's married!"

Ginny started laughing hysterically at Ron, which caused all her brothers to stop their advance. "I don't know what you're thinking, but my Harry has a lot more self control than that. Besides when we do that, it will be our personal business, and none of you will ever question either of us on that subject, and will definitely never assume anything!"

Ginny paused and glared at each of her brothers, daring them to continue on that thread of conversation. Bill, Fred, and George seemed ready to back off, but Ron of course opened his mouth. "But you should be with Daniel! He's more a part of this family than Harry is!" That was possibly the worst thing he could have said.

Three different spells smashed into an unsuspecting Ron from three separate directions.

Break

While Ginny had been defending Harry, Molly had pulled Lily off to the side. She was clearly worried and had a look of open concern on her face.

"Lily, this Elizabeth wouldn't have any connection to Sirius, would she?"

Lily frowned and couldn't meet Molly's eyes. "Yes, she and Sirius were married. They've been separated for a few years now."

Molly nodded and looked off towards a stand of trees near them. "Remus brought Sirius to Grimmauld Place yesterday right before a meeting. He was so drunk he could hardly stand and kept talking nonsense. Well, at that point it was nonsense, now it makes sense. He kept talking about someone named Lizzy and how she didn't trust him."

"Oh dear. He found us. About a week after we left. He and Elizabeth yelled at each other a little and he left. She hasn't let Harry and Ginny see, but the fight affected her pretty badly. I'm positive she still has feelings for him." Lily said looking downcast at the ground.

Loud yelling drew their attention back to the argument unfolding behind them. "Look's like some of your boys are fixed on defending their sister's honor. I guarantee they didn't do anything like that though. I put up charms to detect that sort of thing. Although I do have the most adorable picture to show you." Lily grinned mischievously, but it faded as Ron yelled loudly at his sister.

"Oh dear." Lily said as three different spells hit Ron, one of which had originated from right next to her.

Break

Ginny, Harry, Lily, Molly, Fred, George, and Bill stood around the stiff form of Ron. They were all looking at the pitiful form before them. His arms and legs were stuck to his sides, and his back was stiff. Giant bat bogey's were still flying around his head clawing his face. His lips were open just a little bit but no sound was coming from them.

"So I hit him with the bat bogey, who else hit him?" Ginny asked looking at the rest of the group curiously.

George raised his hand slowly. "I tried to silence him, but was a little too late." The group laughed quietly, before Mrs. Weasley raised her hand slowly.

"I hit him with the full body bind. What he said was totally inappropriate." She glanced down at the rigid form of her son once more and sighed. "I suppose we should cancel the spells, hopefully he's learned his lesson."

The rest of the group groaned but George cancelled both his and Ginny's spells, Mrs. Weasley followed their example shortly and Ron cautiously pulled himself up off the ground. He looked warily at his mother before turning and bolting into the house.

Break



Although the original plan had been to drop off Ginny, hopefully enjoy a nice dinner and then return to Grimmauld Place, Mrs. Weasley insisted Lily, Harry, and Elizabeth stay as long as they liked. Tonks declined the offer and instead returned to her parents home, to let them know she was alright. They'd only planned to stay for a day, maybe two, but before they knew it, it was August 11th. Ginny's birthday had arrived.

Harry had been staying in Percy's old room, Percy had been able to afford a new apartment and moved out earlier that summer. He was the first one up that morning and was out of bed almost instantly. He'd planned a big day. Once showered and dressed he hurried downstairs and arrived in the kitchen just before Mrs. Weasley.

When Mrs. Weasley arrived Harry was already working at the stove and had several piece of fruit set up on the counter. She watched the teenage boy expertly make a large plate of sausage, eggs, and bacon. This was placed on a tray next to a bowl of assorted cut fruit, and a plate of toast. In the center was a pitcher of orange juice and two cups. Next to the pitcher was a rose in a small vase.

Once Harry was finished he turned around with the tray in his arms. He smiled at Mrs. Weasley as he passed her on his way to the stairs and then disappeared up them. Mrs. Weasley shook her head in amusement and turned towards the stove to prepare breakfast for the rest of the family.

Harry cautiously pushed open the door to Ginny's room, he knew she was still sound asleep, and quietly entered the room. He closed the door and set the tray gently down on her desk. He stood for a second just watching her sleep, still amazed that a girl that beautiful would want him. He edged closer to the bed and kneeled down by her head. As if sensing his presence one of her hands began to grope towards where his hand rested on the edge of the bed.

He took her hand, and began rubbing gentle patterns on the back with his thumb. Smirking mischievously he began placing light kisses on her cheeks, nose, eyes, forehead, and finally on her lips. She'd slowly been waking up as he kissed her and when his lips finally found hers she responded willingly.

They stayed locked together for several minutes before Harry finally pulled back and his emerald eyes found her chocolate ones. "Mmm, I think you should wake me up like this every morning."

"Another three years and I will. Happy Birthday!" Harry said before he leaned down and kissed Ginny again.

They were soon interrupted again when Ginny's stomach growled loudly. "Sorry, but I can smell mum's cooking from here." She looked down at her traitorous stomach in irritation.

"Don't worry. I don't have any of your mum's cooking, but I do have breakfast in bed for two courtesy of Harry Potter." Harry said as he stood and retrieved the tray from the desk where he'd left it.

Ginny's eyes lit up as they fell upon the massive amount of food Harry had brought up with him. Almost instantly they were drawn to the slices of watermelon on the side of the fruit bowl. Harry made a motion with his elbow for her to move over and she did so instantly. Harry sat down on the bed next to her and placed the tray over her lap.

"This looks amazing Harry! Thank you so much!" Ginny's smile spread across her entire face and was infectious as Harry smiled too.

Half an hour later all the food was gone. Most of it had been eaten, but some of the fruit had disappeared when a minor food fight had broken out. Harry insisted Ginny not lift a finger to help him clean up and she watched in amusement as he neatly piled all the dishes on the tray and tried to carry it all out the door to her room and down the stairs.

Break

Later that day, after she and Harry had spent most of it finding quiet places to sit and snog in isolation, Harry pulled Ginny back towards the house. In the back yard a small party had been set up. Lily, Molly, Elizabeth, Fred, George, Bill, Mr. Weasley, Percy, Neville, and Luna were all waiting for them when they returned. Mr. Weasley, with a lot of help from Lily, had set up the stereo that Ginny had bought in New York. They'd charmed it to work on magic once they realized the magic at the Burrow disrupted it.

Ron showed up for a few minutes and tensely wished his sister a happy birthday. He quickly retreated up to his room after that and Harry saw his small owl fly off soon after that. Just after the sun had set Ginny blew out her candles and began working on her presents.

Lily and Elizabeth gave her three outfits they'd caught her looking at in New York, one of which was in a small black box which made her blush and quickly hide it deep in the bag. Fred and George gave her a box filled with samples of all their joke products. Percy gave her a book on successful Head Boys and Girls. Bill gave her a book on curse breaking, she and Harry had recently been considering that as a future career. Her parents told her that they'd be paying for two sets of dress robes when they went to Diagon Alley the following week, and hoped she didn't mind the wait.

Finally she came to Harry's present. Stuck to the top of the wrapping paper with two low level stick charms were two more charms for her bracelet. One was a miniature of the Empire State Building, and the second was a baseball. Ginny snickered as she remembered the one time they'd gone to see a baseball game at Yankee Stadium. A foul ball had landed right in her popcorn, scaring the living daylights out of her. Inside the box was a pair of emerald earrings. Ginny held them up and all the women ohhed and ahed at them.

Ginny thanked everyone profusely and the party once again broke up into small groups of people talking and laughing while the music played in the background. The backyard of the Burrow had been lit by hanging lanterns and fairies that sparkled and twinkled from the trees and bushes. Ginny soon found herself sitting comfortably at the base of a tree her head leaning on Harry's shoulder.

(a/n I know a lot of you hate it when the author makes a note in the middle of the story. This is important though. When writing the following dance scene I had the song So Close by Jon McLaughlin from the new movie Enchanted in mind. If you look at the lyrics, which I didn't include, you'll see how it relates to what's about to happen.)

They stayed that way for a long time before Harry edged out from underneath Ginny and stood up. She looked at him in confusion as he turned around and offered her his hand. "Milady, may I have this dance?"

Ginny smiled and listened to the light music playing from the radio. "Of course milord." She replied playfully.

Harry helped her up and they moved away from the tree. He pulled her close and slowly began to sway and move around the open lawn. Ginny sighed contentedly before looking at Harry suspiciously. "You hate dancing. Why the sudden interest?"

Harry smirked playfully and he twirled her and then pulled her back into his arms. "It gives me a reason to hold you unnecessarily close without getting glares from your brothers." His eyes met hers and held them as the music slowed its pace and so did they. "Plus it makes me feel like we're the only two people in the world."

Ginny smiled lovingly at the man in front of her before laying her head on his shoulder as they continued to sway. She closed her eyes contentedly and distractedly whispered. "That's a really good answer."

When she put her head on his shoulder Harry took the opportunity to glance around. Mr. and Mrs. Weasley were in a similar position a few yards away from them, while everyone else at the party looked at Harry and Ginny happily. Harry smirked when he saw Neville pull Luna out into the yard and start dancing with her.

The song ended shortly and Ginny began to pull Harry back towards the tree they'd been resting under, plans of how to reward her amazing boyfriend already running through her head. Before they made it there though several loud pops echoed through the air. Harry and Ginny scowled as they watched Dumbledore followed by James and Professor McGonagall walk across the yard towards the party.

Lily, Arthur, and Molly walked out to meet them, Elizabeth trailing a short distance behind. "Headmaster, this is a private party. Please leave." Molly said as she glared at the headmaster.

McGonagall looked horrified at the cold tone Molly used when addressing the Headmaster, while James tried desperately to make eye contact with his wife. Dumbledore simply sighed before ignoring Molly and turning to Lily. "Mrs. Potter, what you and your son did was very foolish. It is imperative you return to Headquarters before Voldemort learns of your whereabouts."

"No." Lily said as she crossed her arms in front of her chest.

Dumbledore looked slightly taken aback when she refused outright. "What do you mean? It is for your own safety that you return to Headquarters."

"I said no. We are staying here, the Weasley's have invited us to stay for the rest of the holiday. Then we'll return to Hogwarts, and after that Potter Manor will be ready." By this point Harry and Ginny had made their way across the yard and stood a short way off watching the unfolding confrontation.

"Mrs. Potter! I implore you for your own safety to return to Headquarters! Voldemort is gaining power almost constantly and he will soon be ready to attack!"

Harry took this opportunity to step forward and clear his throat loudly drawing the attention of everyone. "We're fine here Headmaster. As my mother has already told you, we will be staying here. Mrs. Weasley has asked you to leave, I suggest you do so before we're forced to have the aurors involved."

Professor McGonagall paled and looked like she was about to faint, her lips pulled so tightly they practically disappeared. "Never in all my years! How dare you speak to the Headmaster in such a fashi-"

Dumbledore silenced her with a hand movement as he looked at the group in front of him. "Mr. Potter is correct. We cannot force them to do anything. We can however rest easier knowing we tried. I believe we should take our leave."

Without waiting for a reply Dumbledore turned and began walking away towards the edge of the wards around the Burrow. McGonagall was quick to follow, but James paused as if he wanted to say something. Lily still refused to make eye contact with him. Finally he turned to go but not before pausing and looking back over his shoulder.

"I-I'm sorry... for everything." Then he rushed off towards where Dumbledore and McGonagall had just disappeared from.

Lily sighed finally looking at her husband's retreating back. The she turned and began ushering everyone back to the party.

Break

A few days later the Hogwarts letters arrived, much later than normal. Inside Harry's letter was a prefects badge. He briefly considered accepting the honor before realizing the extra work would lessen the amount of time he had with Ginny. So he sent the badge back to Professor Flitwick with a short reply telling him he couldn't accept the badge. He also had a slight suspicion that Dumbledore had had something to do with him receiving the badge.

A few days later the Weasley family, along with Harry, Lily, and Elizabeth went to Diagon Alley. Ginny and her parents almost immediately broke off from the group to go get the dress robes she'd been promised. Harry, Lily, Elizabeth, and the twins headed to Flourish and Blotts to begin gathering the textbooks needed for that year. Ron left saying something about meeting some friends.

Ginny had just left Madame Malkin's when she felt a wave of disgust and annoyance roll through the bond from Harry.

'What's wrong?' She asked worriedly through the bond.

'Which part do you want first the really disgusting part, or the really annoying part?' Harry answered through the bond, even his mental voice sounded slightly nauseous.

'Let's go with the annoying part first.' She was hurrying as quickly as she could towards Flourish and Blotts but the crowds around it seemed abnormally large.

'Our new defense textbook this year is a joke. I think it was published in the 1950's. It doesn't even mention practical use of defense spells, just theory. Only another poor excuse for a teacher would assign this.' Ginny knew Harry had hated nearly every Defense teacher they'd had since he started school. The only exception had been Remus.

'Sounds like another fun year in DADA. So what's the disgusting part?' The curiosity of what could actually disgust Harry this badly was killing her.

'Are you sure you want to know?' He sounded nauseous again, and she could tell he was once again looking at the disgusting thing.

'Yes. Either way I'll be there in a minute.'

'Fine, but don't say I didn't warn you.' She heard him sigh mentally. 'Daniel just showed up with Lavender Brown. Oh gods. It's disgusting they're snogging in the middle of the store. Actually I don't think you could even consider it snogging, more like trying to lick and suck each others faces off.'

Ginny mentally gagged, as she formed a mental picture, helped along by the thoughts passing through Harry's head. A second later she finally pushed her way through the large crowd and spotted Harry on the other side of the room. His eyes immediately found hers, and it took her a moment to realize Daniel and Lavender were only a few feet to her left. As Harry had said, it looked like they were trying to lick and suck each others faces off.

Ginny quickly edged away from the passionate couple and soon found herself once again in Harry's arms. 'I think I'm going to be sick.'

Harry could only nod not trusting himself to speak. After another second he began pulling Ginny deeper into the store and away from Daniel and Lavender. Eventually they had to return to the main area of the store, but by that time Daniel and Lavender were thankfully gone and Harry and Ginny made it through the rest of the day without seeing them again.

Break

September 1st finally arrived and Harry and Ginny along with the rest of the Weasley's and Elizabeth arrived at the station with ten minutes to spare. Harry knew the Ministry had been creating a giant propaganda campaign to deny the return of Voldemort, but he was still a little surprised to see that there wasn't a single auror guarding the train platform.

Harry, Ginny, Neville and Luna managed to secure a compartment by themselves near the back of the train. They shared a quiet laugh over the fact that Hermione and Daniel had been made Gryffindor

prefects and that Ron had to spend the first portion of the trip by himself.

The trip itself went very quickly and quietly with Harry and Ginny spending a lot of time telling Neville and Luna about their vacation. They eventually pulled out the photo album Lily had given them and Neville made some sly comments regarding the last picture in the album.

Break

When they finally arrived at Hogsmeade station, the quartet grabbed one of the carriages near the front of the procession. Lisa Turpin and Michael Corner joined them a few seconds later, politely asking if they could share a carriage. No one noticed that a majority of the Slytherins had claimed the last few carriages in the procession.

The carriages took off down the poorly lighted path towards the main gates to Hogwarts. The trip wasn't that long and usually only took five minutes. As the first carriage rounded the final bend before the open twenty meter straight stretch of road to the gates, the surrounding forest went eerily quiet. No one in the first few carriages noticed as they were talking loudly and joyously.

The first carriage was just approaching the gates when it stopped moving and some invisible creature let out a frightened whine. The first carriage had five students in it, when it stopped they began looking around in confusion. After a second one of the girls pointed in horror at something near the gates.

Break

Harry and Ginny's carriage was about six carriages behind the first one, so it shuddered to a stop shortly after the first one had. The group in their carriage turned to look towards the first one and had a brief glimpse of the people in the first carriage pointing in horror at something hanging from the gargoyles next to the main gate. A second later and the first carriage exploded.

The quiet night air almost instantly filled with terrified screams as those close enough saw the burning bodies of those in the first carriage being thrown into the forest by the force of the explosion. Ginny briefly glimpsed something moving through the forest on their



right and reacting on instinct grabbed Luna and Lisa and pulled them down onto the floor of the carriage. A millisecond later Harry pulled Neville and Michael down next to them.

Harry heard several people shout and then something collided with their carriage. A wooden spoke from the carriage wheel blasted up through the floor of the carriage right next to Harry's head. Then in slow motion the carriage began tipping over to the right. The six students within braced themselves as gravity took over and they started rolling out of the carriage halfway through its decent.

Harry and Ginny, having been trained in combat for several years, hit the ground and rolled into a crouching position, their wands already in hand. A brief glimpse showed about a dozen Death Eaters emerging from the forest onto the side of the road. Most were already throwing curses and hexes into the trapped and panicking groups of students.

Harry and Ginny quickly threw up shields protecting themselves and the still dazed Neville, Luna, Lisa, and Michael. Once the shields were up they each began launching hexes and curses back at the Death Eaters. They managed to surprise two of them, knocking them out with stunners, before the rest realized that they were being attacked.

Harry and Ginny began ducking, diving, and dodging in perfect unison as they sunk further into the bond. A Death Eater came around from the other side of the carriage directly behind Ginny, and Harry caught a flash of silver as the Death Eater raised his wand to cast a spell at Ginny's back.

"Reducto!" The blasting hex smashed into the Death Eaters kneecap, blowing it apart and sending the Death Eater spinning to the ground.

Harry saw Ginny point her wand over his shoulder and a silver spell shot past him. He glanced over his shoulder to see a Death Eater desperately clutching his eyes which were bleeding profusely from the cutting curse Ginny had hit him with. By this point Neville, Luna, Lisa, and Michael had retreated back to the relative safety of the overturned carriage.

The fighting dulled for a second as the combatants repositioned themselves, and Harry took the opportunity to conjure his patronus and send the glowing white tiger sprinting towards the school.

Harry and Ginny fell back until they were fighting back to back against the remaining Death Eaters. The frightened and pain filled screams of the other students around them faded as they fully immersed themselves in their bond. Moving as one they turned from a defensive stance to an offensive covering each others blind spots as they unleashed hell on the Death Eaters still fighting them. A majority of which, had turned to continue wrecking havoc on the frightened students.

Break

Daniel, Ron, Hermione, and Lavender had been in a carriage with some third years farther down the line. They'd watched in horror as the first dozen carriages were flipped over, or simply exploded in flames. Then had frozen in terror when the Death Eaters emerged from the forest. After a few seconds an ear piercing scream had jump started them into motion.

Daniel and Ron were the first ones down out of the carriage. The second they were out a Death Eater nearby launched a series of curses at them. Daniel and Ron had received some training from James and Dumbledore, so they were able to roll out of the way of the curses. The girls behind them were stuck on the stairs and weren't as fortunate.

A bone breaking hex caught Lavender in the arm and she screamed in pain as she fell to the ground. Hermione caught a silver white curse between the eyes and had a split second to say "Oh" before her eyes rolled up in her head and she collapsed to the ground unconscious.

Daniel and Ron were too busy avoiding the Death Eater attacking them to notice their friends had been injured. Daniel barely dodged a killing curse before letting off a flurry of stunners and blasting curses. The Death Eater raised a shield which absorbed all of the attacks. Then he made a mistake, totally forgetting about Ron the Death Eater caught Daniel under the Cruciatus curse. As Daniel screamed in pain Ron shot a stunner at the Death Eater from the side, finally incapacitating the man.

Ron rushed over to Daniel's side helping him to his feet. Daniel stood up shakily before the ground at their feet exploded sending both flying backwards to the ground. When they recovered they found three Death Eaters approaching them slowly, the one in the center had somehow lost her mask and crazed black eyes looked out from under frayed and lackluster black hair.

"Well, well, well if it isn't ickle Potter. Won't our master be so glad to hear we killed you baby Potter." The woman drawled in a false high pitch. The two Death Eaters on either side of her chuckled menacingly.

The woman raised her wand and pointed it right at Daniel's chest as she stood above him.

Break

The Head Table in the Great Hall of Hogwarts was filled to the breaking point. All of the Professors were there, except for Hagrid, McGonagall, and Madame Pomfrey. Several guests were also present, including Elizabeth, Remus and Sirius, although Sirius sat on the far side of the table from Elizabeth. The Hall was predictably much quieter than normal as the student had yet to arrive. It was normal for the first few students to began pouring into the Hall anytime between seven and seven fifteen.

It was now seven twenty, and still no sign of the students. If they didn't arrive soon the first years may arrive too early. No one noticed the dull orange glow that began to seep into the edge of the enchanted ceiling facing the main gates. It wasn't until Professor Flitwick looked up in boredom that the orange glow was finally noticed.

"What is that?" He squeaked as he pointed to the ceiling. Many of the teachers around him looked up at the ceiling and pointed it out to those around them. Finally every Professor was looking up at the ceiling in curiosity and confusion.

It was only a second later that McGonagall burst into the Hall out of breathe and gasping for air. She wordlessly pointed towards the doors of the school before finally finding her voice. "The Forest is on Fire!"

The reaction was instantaneous as almost every person in the Great Hall leaped to their feet. They barely had time to react to that news however, before Harry's glowing white tiger patronus leapt into the Hall with a roar. It opened its mouth and Harry's voice filled the Hall.

"Death Eaters attacking the carriages need help! Can't hold them off much longer!"

The Hall was dead silent for several seconds before everyone began moving and talking at once. After several seconds of disarray Dumbledore created a loud booming noise with his wand, drawing all attention to himself.

"Argus go to the Hospital Wing. Tell Poppy to prepare for massive casualties, then floo the aurors! Fawkes!" The phoenix appeared in a burst of flame at its partner's call and settled on the table in front of him. "Everyone coming to help defend the students grab a tail feather!"

Every person in the room either grabbed a tail feather or a person holding a tail feather, except for one. A short toad looking woman remained in her seat and looked murderously at the Headmaster. Before they could leave she spoke loud enough for all to hear.

"I don't know what you're trying to pull Headmaster. There are no Death Eaters to attack the students. The boy obviously saw the fire and thanks to your fear mongering jumped to incorrect conclusions." Her voice was sickly high pitched and had no right to be coming from such an ugly squat woman.

Dumbledore spared her barely a glance before responding. "Believe what you will Madame Umbridge the children still need our help. Fawkes bring us to just inside the main gates."

In a burst of flame everyone in the Great Hall disappeared, except Umbridge who quickly left in the direction of her office.

Break

Harry and Ginny quickly realized that their estimation of a dozen Death Eaters, was horribly inaccurate. A dozen Death Eaters now lay on the ground around them, dead or incapacitated, and more

continued to immerge from the forest around them. The fight had been going on for well over ten minutes now, and they were beginning to tire.

The entire forest on either side of the road appeared to be on fire, though the Death Eaters managed to find clear areas to apparate into. They'd also realized that Harry and Ginny posed a formidable threat and had begun attacking them in force.

Harry and Ginny for their part hadn't been hit once and only had small cuts from when they'd rolled or dove onto small sticks on the ground. Neither noticed though.

Harry hit another Death Eater with a blasting curse, leaving a nice sized hole in his chest. Ginny had become a master of cutting curses and as proof of that another Death Eater fell to the ground, one arm missing at the elbow, a deep gash across his chest, and a diagonal slice from his left eyebrow across his eye, the bridge of his nose, and ending near the right joint in his jaw.

Outside Harry and Ginny appeared to be emotionless as they cut down enemy after enemy, inside they were both horrified at what they were being forced to do to defend their friends. They managed to keep these emotions at bay though. They knew any small mistake now would mean the difference between life and death, and in a game of kill or be killed, they'd rather be alive at the end.

Harry dodged the sickly green of a killing curse and spun on the Death Eater who'd fired it at him. "You did not just shoot that green shit at me!" Frustrated and a little tired Harry flicked his hand and watched in grim satisfaction as the Death Eater was thrown backwards hitting a tree trunk with a sickening crunch.

It seemed only a second later that the Death Eaters around them began to pull away and retreat back towards the forest. Harry and Ginny both looked around in confusion before seeing that the Teachers were pouring through the gates and joining the battle. Seeing no immediate danger they returned to where their friends were huddled near the overturned carriage.

"Are you guys okay?" Ginny asked as the other four looked at them in awe.

"Y-Yea we're fine." Neville finally managed to utter as the others nodded. "Thanks to you two." He added looking in wonder from Harry to Ginny.

"Good, stay here we're going to help the others."

Without a second glance Harry and Ginny took off in different directions. Ginny ran towards the carriage that had been in front of theirs while Harry headed to the one behind. Ginny arrived at the carriage in front of theirs to find four students laying on the ground. Two, a boy and girl, appeared to have been under the Cruciatus curse, one, another boy, was definitely dead, and the last had a deep gash across her chest.

Ginny and Harry had both learned healing magic from Helga, and had proven quite adept at it. Rowena had theorized that their ability to heal almost anything in their phoenix forms may have transferred, at least partially, to their human forms.

Without the proper potions Ginny couldn't do much for the Cruciatus victims, so she went directly to the cut girl and held her hands over the wounds. A golden glow appeared around her hands and the wound began to sew itself back together.

Once it was done, Ginny took enough time to conjure a blanket over the dead boy before running off to the next carriage.

Break

The black haired woman stood over Daniel, her crazed eyes twinkling in the fire light. She opened her mouth, preparing to utter the words that would forever end his life when another voice cut her off.

"Step away from my son Bellatrix!"

The three Death Eaters, along with Daniel and Ron, all turned to look at the source of the voice. Standing barely ten meters away was James flanked by Sirius and Remus.

"Oh goody! The elder Potter and my dear cousin! Both of you came out to play tonight! Good, I so look forward to killing you!"

Daniel took her momentary distraction and grabbed his wand which lay a few inches away on the ground. He stunned the Death Eater on Bellatrix's left before anyone realized he had his wand back. Sirius, Remus, and James immediately jumped into action. Remus and Sirius sent stunners at the other Death Eater before he could react.

A split second later and Bellatrix found herself alone against James, Daniel, Sirius, and Remus. "Oh well, perhaps another time dear cousin." Before they could stop her she grabbed something inside her robes and disappeared.

At almost the same instant she disappeared many of other Death Eaters disappeared too. Only some of the bodies that had apparently lost their portkeys remained on the ground. James, Sirius, and Remus helped Daniel and Ron to their feet, but before they could say anything another voice interrupted them.

"Help! Please help!" Lavender screamed. She was laying on the ground near the carriage, Hermione's body was splayed out on the ground in front of her.

Break

An hour later Harry and Ginny sat on a bed in the Great Hall. There were dozens of the beds as almost the entire student body was sleeping in the Great Hall that night. Well, all the students that were healthy at least, were sleeping in the Great Hall. That ended up being less than half of each house, except Slytherin. Slytherin house hadn't lost a single student.

Twenty students had died. Twenty.

Another fifty had suffered injuries of some sort. Fifteen of them were permanent. Five had been tortured under the Cruciatus so long they were now no more than vegetables. Ten had lost anything from a hand, a foot, arms, legs, an ear, and in one case an eye.

There was only one person who no one was sure about. Hermione still hadn't woken up. Neither Madame Pomfrey nor the healers from St. Mungo's were sure what was wrong with her. They only knew that she currently couldn't be woken up and that she didn't respond to any outside stimuli.

Harry and Ginny sat wrapped in each others arms. Many of the students had seen them fighting, or received medical attention from one of them. They had become heroes in the eyes of the other students, and that story was quickly spreading like wildfire to other sources.

The two heroes of the night still weren't granted peace though. When they finally fell asleep Harry was pulled into a vision of Voldemort, only this time Ginny was pulled along with him.

Break

The streetlights in the small village twinkled merrily before the Black Army. They were totally silent as they marched into the center of the town. The town was small, resting between a suburban and a rural area. Perhaps three hundred people lived there. That would be enough.

There was not a soul awake in the small town at that time of night. Thus no one was there to raise an alarm as the Army moved into place. They spread out around the center of the town. It was old fashioned and many of the stores doubled as living areas for the owners with bedrooms on the second floor.

Four or five of the white masked, black cloaked demons moved to stand in front of each building. They raised their arms revealing wooden sticks clutched in tense hands. Then as one screamed. "Incendio!"

The reaction was instant as the bottom floors of over two dozen of the buildings burst into flames. It only took a few minutes before windows were thrown open and the occupants of the buildings began to try and crawl out the windows to safety. These poor individuals were almost immediately hit with killing curses and they would fall lifeless to the ground below them.

The snake faced leader of this Black Army stood in the center of the village reveling in the chaos and death around him. Harry and Ginny who were watching through his eyes felt sick as the fire revealed the sign on the building in front of them.

Granger Dental.



Break

At four a.m. a tired looking auror apparated into the central square of what should have been a quiet village. They'd received a report from an old squib that the town was under attack. It had been ignored for several hours as most of the auror force was deployed at Hogwarts helping to clean up what had become known as the Hogwarts Massacre.

The auror who'd been sent, Eric Swanson, was fresh out of the academy. So when he arrived in the center of the town, he was totally unprepared for the sight that greeted him.

Burned out remains of what had once been buildings, flaming metal skeletons from destroyed cars, fallen lampposts, and cracked and destroyed streets were just the physical damages. The thing that brought poor Swanson to his knees as his late dinner fought its way up his throat, was the dozens of burnt, scared, and dismembered bodies laying everywhere.

It took several minutes for him to collect himself before he managed to apparate away. It would be almost another hour before he could round up enough help to return to the destroyed village.

A/N

As Master Yoda would say, "The shroud of the darkside has fallen. Begun the Second War has."

By far the longest chapter! I hope you didn't mind the fluff to action. Also I just wanted to say that i would have put the lyrics to So Close in, except i got a lot of reviews warning me about it after the yule ball chapter. So i thought i'd just leave it out this tiem, and let you go look the lyrics up yourself.

There you go, almost three weeks without a single update, and then my two longest in less than five days.

As of right now Hermione's fate is in your hands. I personally don't care if she recovers or not, i can write it either way since she really isn't important at all. Either way it's oh poor Hermione her parents

are dead, or poor Hermione she's suffering from (censored for giving away possible plot) and will never recover.

Let me know how you liked the chapter, next: Chapter 20: Ministry Morons.

P.S. Over 900 reviews!

## Chapter 20: Massacre Aftermath

### HOGWARTS ATTACKED!

#### Ministry Blames Headmaster Dumbledore!

According to a ministry press release earlier this morning, an unknown amount of Death Eaters attacked Hogwarts students last night as they were transported from the Hogwarts Express to the castle. Since that time Hogwarts Castle has been under a lock down and no reporters have been able to get near the scene of the crime.

One reporter was able to get this information from an auror on guard duty: "There were definite casualties... On both sides." The auror, who wishes to remain anonymous, was unable to say anything else.

This response leads this reporter to believe that some of the older students or even teachers were able to capture, or even kill, one or more of the attackers. The attackers as of yet have remained unidentified, however rumors circulating at the Ministry believe them to be Death Eaters.

Minister Fudge held a brief press conference near two a.m. to address the issue. When asked if the identity of any of the attackers was known he had this to say:

"Several of the attackers have been identified as suspected Death Eaters who were cleared of charges shortly after You-Know-Who's demise. It is my belief, and the belief of this administration, that fear-mongering led by Headmaster Dumbledore emboldened these terrorists to attack our children. I have already spoken to Lucius Malfoy, head of the Hogwarts Board of Governors, and he has agreed to call for a vote of no confidence in the Headmaster."

When asked if these attacks help support the claims that He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named has returned Minister Fudge responded quite vehemently.

"You-Know-Who has most certainly not returned! He is dead! A person no matter how powerful cannot return from the dead. This attack was the work of crazed madmen encouraged by lies spouted by Headmaster Dumbledore. These men will be brought to justice! You can have faith that the Ministry will see to that."

At this time that is all the information we have. This reporter along with the entire staff of the Daily Prophet send their condolences to all the families and loved ones who's children may have been injured today.

The Prophet will continue to follow this story in a special night edition later today.

BREAK

Harry and Ginny were sleeping soundly on the cot they were sharing in the Great Hall. No one had dared to disturb them since they'd fallen asleep hours earlier. It was nearing ten a.m. when Harry began to stir. When he finally opened his eyes he found that the Great Hall was empty and he and Ginny were the only students who remained asleep.

An oppressive silence hung around the room, and was only disturbed by the even breathing of the red haired angel next to him. Not wishing to disturb her, but extremely curious as to what was going on, Harry found himself in a dilemma. The two sides warred inside his head and finally he gave in and gently shook Ginny's shoulder.

She opened her eyes, blinked, and then smiled up at Harry. Stretching slowly, and in the process giving Harry a rather appealing vision, Ginny sat up and looked around the Great Hall curiously. Before either could say anything though the doors to the Great Hall opened and Lily walked in. Her hair was messy and she had bags under her blood shot eyes. It was obvious she hadn't slept much.

"Oh good you're awake, I was just coming to get you." Lily said as she approached the two teens.

"What's wrong?" Harry asked, concerned at his mother's lack of sleep.

"We need the Great Hall. Many of the parents will be arriving soon, and a large amount of Ministry officials, including the Minister." She paused and looked seriously at the two of them. "I'm very proud of both of you. I don't particularly care where you learned to defend

yourselves like that. However, several other people are curious. Stories of what you two did have been spreading like wildfire."

She smiled and hugged both of them tightly. "Your parents will be here shortly Ginny. I suggest you two head upstairs and take a shower." She paused and caught the hint of a smirk pass between the two. "Separate showers."

Harry groaned dramatically while Ginny blushed a light shade of red. "Alright mum, we'll see you soon." Harry and Ginny made it halfway to the door before both froze and Harry looked cautiously over his shoulder at his mother. "Mum, was there a second attack last night?"

The image of the Granger Dental sign being engulfed in flames flashed across both their minds. Lily tensed noticeably as she nodded slowly. "An entire muggle village. Very early this morning, it looks like the entire village was wiped out."

Harry and Ginny slumped under the news. Neither would say it, but after hearing the prophecy over the summer they felt partially responsible for all the horrible things Voldemort was doing. Not wanting to hear the gruesome details, both turned and continued out of the Great Hall, leaving Lily alone to transfigure it back to normal.

BREAK

As predicted Harry and Ginny found themselves in Dumbledore's office only twenty minutes after the Ministry delegation had arrived. Lily, and Mr. and Mrs. Weasley sat protectively around their children. James stood behind Lily, his hands resting on her shoulders. Dumbledore sat behind his desk, while the Minister sat next to him.

Standing next to and slightly in front of Dumbledore's desk were several other members of the Ministry delegation. A short toady woman, dressed in far too much pink for either Harry or Ginny's taste, was introduced as Madam Umbridge. Next to her was a stern looking woman, who reminded them very much of Professor McGonagall, with a monocle in one eye. She was introduced as Madam Bones. Finally was a tall bald headed black man, he spoke with in a slow deep voice, all of his words carefully picked. He introduced himself as Auror Shacklebolt.

Once the introductions were through Dumbledore leaned forward in his chair. "Mr. Potter, Ms. Weasley. I want you both to understand that this isn't a formal hearing. We are all simply curious as to how two students were able to defeat so many Death Eaters."

Fudge interrupted before Dumbledore could continue. "Just one minute Dumbledore! Those men were not Death Eaters. They were simply political radicals inspired by your fear mongering!"

James snorted loudly from the back of the group and glared at the Minister. "I beg to differ Minister. If they weren't Death Eaters, how is it I personally fought Bellatrix Lestrange. Isn't she supposed to be locked away in Azkaban?"

The Minister paled slightly but puffed his chest out importantly. "You must have been mistaken Auror Potter. Bellatrix Lestrange is locked away in Azkaban. There's no way you could have seen her last night during the attack."

Shacklebolt and Bones both glared at the Minister, and finally Madam Bones stepped forward. "Minister enough is enough! You know perfectly well that there was a mass breakout from Azkaban earlier this week. There's no point in lying about it now."

Fudge glared at Madam Bones before turning sheepishly to James and then Dumbledore. "I was trying to avoid a mass panic. The Aurors and Dementors will most likely have the escaped prisoners rounded up by the end of the month. No need to add to the panic you've already caused Albus."

Harry finally spoke up, the disbelief in his voice obvious. "You knew there had been a mass breakout from Azkaban and yet you didn't think it was a good idea to place guards at the train station?"

Fudge opened and closed his mouth wordlessly, unable to come up with an excuse this time. Madam Umbridge however stepped forward. "Excuse me Mr. Potter. This is a discussion amongst the adults. A child should be seen and not heard. If we want your opinion we will ask for it."

Harry had been holding Ginny's hand the entire time, and as Umbridge spoke he felt her tightening her grip. The anger flooding between them rose to an remarkable height. Umbridge didn't seem

to notice the temperature of the room raise, or the mysterious wind that was blowing Harry and Ginny's hair. The rest of the adults in the room did notice the change.

Lily, and the Weasley's subtly began moving their chairs away from the furious couple. Fudge, Bone, and Shacklebolt all looked at the couple in awe. Their eyes were now glowing softly with an internal light. Dumbledore was looking at the two in fascination as the temperature in the room continued to rise.

Umbridge, stupidly, kept speaking. "Minister, as I was telling you earlier the stories about these two are just that... stories! To think that two mediocre students could defeat that many grown wizards is preposterous. Perhaps they managed to outsmart one or two, but as I was telling you earlier the precise statistics of the battle are exaggerated." She paused as she noticed everyone in the rooms attention on the two young people. She looked towards them and took an involuntary step backwards as her eyes met Harry's.

"Madam Umbridge, I truly am surprised that you think you know what happened out there." Harry's voice was calm but Umbridge still flinched and took another step backwards. "From my understanding of yesterdays events, you tried to disregard the patronus I sent for help and then refused to come help the student that were under attack and dying."

Bones and Shacklebolt both turned to Umbridge the disapproval of her cowardly acts evident on their faces. "As for the claims that it was exaggerated, I can tell you with absolute certainty. My Ginny and I had to kill fourteen people yesterday in self defense. We wounded and effectively crippled another ten." No one missed Harry using the possessive adjective when referring to Ginny, though only a few understood its meaning.

Umbridge of course, opened her mouth. "Stop trying to play the hero Potter! I doubt you and your little strumpet did-" She never finished the sentence. Several things had happened at once. Mr. Weasley, Mrs. Weasley, and Lily had all moved to object to what Umbridge was saying, they however never got the chance.

A magic pulse shot out from Harry and Umbridge was slammed backwards into a wall. Everyone in the room looked on in awe as

Harry stood took a step, disappeared in a ball of flames, and then reappeared standing over the crumpled form of Umbridge.

"Don't ever talk about her like that again." He spoke in a deadly whisper and the fear it was meant to instill obviously carried as Umbridge paled and flinched away from him. "If you ever insult her again, I'll make your life a living hell."

Umbridge curled into a fetal position as Harry turned and walked away from the crumpled woman. Without a word Ginny met him halfway across the room and hand in hand they left the office. The remaining people in the office looked in awe at the door that had just closed behind them.

Finally Shacklebolt leaned over subtly to Madam Bones and in the dead silence of the room said rather loudly. "He'll make one hell of an auror one day. Hell, they both will. Did you feel the power coming off of them?"

Madam Bones could only nod her head numbly.

BREAK

A few minutes later Harry threw open the door to the Room of Requirement. Inside was a gymnasium filled with glass vases, ice statues, sculptures, and anything else breakable. Before the door had even closed fully behind them Harry glared at several of the vases and flicked his hand. Three vases instantly exploded as several around them flew backwards into the wall.

Ginny rolled her eyes and took a seat on the couch that appeared behind her. A second later a tea cup filled to the brim appeared in front of her. She leaned back to watch Harry blow off some steam, her anger had almost totally dissipated when Harry flew Umbridge into the wall.

BREAK

Everyone in Dumbledore's office had remained motionless for several minutes after Harry and Ginny left. Some were simply stunned by the raw use of power. Only Lily, Dumbledore, and Madam Bones had registered the fact that Harry had used some



sort of flame travel to teleport across the room. The rest had been looking at the wall that Umbridge had hit.

Finally the Minister scurried around Dumbledore's desk to where Umbridge still lay, curled into a fetal position and whimpering in both fear and pain. He bent down at her side and then looked up at Shacklebolt who still stood stoically next to Madam Bones.

"Auror Shacklebolt! I insist you find that boy and have him arrested for assaulting a Ministry Employee!" Fudge was red faced and glaring daggers at Dumbledore, as if it was his fault.

Shacklebolt looked torn and briefly glanced at Madam Bones. Her face remained neutral and she answered his gaze with a noncommittal shrug. It was Dumbledore who was finally able to come to the rescue.

"I'm afraid the matter is out of your hands Cornelius." His eyes twinkled merrily as Fudge's face grew to a deep purple color.

"What! What on earth are you talking about Dumbledore? That boy attacked one of my most trusted advisors and I want him arrested and put on trial for assault!"

"Unfortunately Cornelius, according to the by-laws of the school, the Headmaster has total authority when mediating any matters between students or teachers while on Hogwarts grounds. As such only I have the authority to discipline Mr. Potter and Madam Umbridge."

Fudge was visibly stunned and opened and closed his mouth several times before responding. "I am the Minister of Magic! The by-laws of this school do not apply to this matter! Mr. Potter attacked a ministry employee!"

The twinkle in Dumbledore's eyes disappeared and he stood up bringing himself to his full height. "Do not assume you are all powerful simply due to your position Cornelius! The Hogwarts by-laws predate all ministry laws, and are therefore above the ministry!"

"I-I... That's impossible! You are not above the law Dumbledore! I am the law and I demand that boy be arrested this instant!" Fudge

was beyond furious now, and as such wasn't really paying attention to what he was saying.

"Minister! You've gone too far! The Headmaster is correct, under the founding rules and regulations of the Ministry, Minister Franklin and Headmaster Burr declared the Hogwarts by-laws to be the ruling law on Hogwarts grounds. You have no say here!" Madam Bones yelled forcefully, quieting the Minister quickly.

"Well then, what exactly are your plans for punishing this obviously dark criminal!"

"Two weeks worth of detentions with Professor Snape. It's obvious that was a burst of accidental magic brought on by the disgraceful and inappropriate comments made by Madam Umbridge. For that she shall be suspended from teaching for one month." Everyone in the room couldn't help but smirk at the flabbergasted look on Fudge's face. "James I trust you will be able to cover while Madam Umbridge serves her suspension."

"Of course Albus, it would be my pleasure."

Fudge finally regained some measure of composure and spoke up. "He can't teach Dumbledore he failed to meet the ministry's requirements! He didn't qualify for the job over the summer and he certainly does not qualify now."

Dumbledore turned a disapproving frown towards Fudge. "I don't care." Every head in the room looked at Dumbledore in a mix of shock and amusement, except Fudge, he once again turned purple.

"What?"

"I've tried to appease you Cornelius, given you time to see what was staring you right in the face this whole time. Now students under my protection have died, and are threatened by the Ministry's unresponsiveness. I'll be returning the school to the original by-laws, which means the Ministry will no longer have any authority here."

"You can't do that, the Board of Governors will never allow it!"

Dumbledore smiled kindly at the clearly outraged and slightly fearful Fudge. "Full authority over Hogwarts now rests with the Headmaster.

The Board of Governors has no power left and will be receiving letters of their termination shortly."

"This is an outrage! You-You can't do this! This isn't the end of this Dumbledore! I won't allow this-this treason!"

"I doubted you would Cornelius, but the safety of my students must come before the concerns of the Ministry. If you'll excuse us, I must confer with my fellow teachers on changes we will be making."

Fudge turned a sickening shade of purple and gaped at Dumbledore. His mouth opened and closed several times before he finally growled in rage and pulled Umbridge from the office. As Madam Bones and Auror Shacklebolt prepared to follow, Dumbledore waved for them to remain.

"I will require all of your assistance for what I have planned." Dumbledore began once it was clear Fudge had been sealed out of the room by the gargoyle.

BREAK

Ginny looked up as Harry casually walked up to the couch she was camped on. Ginny smiled kindly and set aside her book as Harry plopped down on the couch next to her.

"You done?" She asked amusedly looking out over the destroyed vases, statues, and ice sculptures.

Harry glanced around the room and flicked his hand towards a remaining statue. It exploded in a cloud of dust and Harry sighed contently. "Now I am."

"You know we're going to have problems with that bitch." Ginny sighed as she tried to burrow her head farther into Harry's shoulders.

"Probably, but we'll deal with it when it comes." Harry shrugged off the problem.

"We should probably be going, dinner is starting soon." Ginny said, begrudgingly pulling her head off Harry's shoulder. Harry stood up beside her and wrapped his arm around her shoulders.

## BREAK

During all this Daniel and Ron had been sitting a silent vigil by Hermione's bed. She still hadn't woken up and it was unclear if she ever would. Daniel and Ron had been informed that her parents had been killed the previous night. They hadn't spoken much, and Daniel had hardly acknowledged Lavender when she came in.

Ron was reading a comic book off to one side while Daniel absentmindedly cleaned his prefect badge. Madam Pomfrey bustled around the room attending to all the assorted patients from the attack. Therefore no one really noticed when Hermione's eyes opened silently. It took almost five minutes before Daniel looked up.

"Hermione! You're awake!" The girls dull eyes turned towards the source of the noise and she smiled dreamily at him. Then to Daniel and Ron's shock she blew a spit bubble and giggled happily.

"Hermione?" Ron asked nervously. She only answered him by giggling and waving her arms about happily.

"Madam Pomfrey! Madam Pomfrey!" Daniel shouted as the matron bustled past again. She returned shortly and looked curiously at the nearly full grown girl giggling like a small child.

"Oh dear." Madam Pomfrey said as she gently pushed Daniel away from the girl. She waved her wand several times and Hermione glowed. Hermione cooed as the colors surrounded her and reached a hand out to try and grab the colors.

"Madam Pomfrey what's wrong?" Daniel asked as the matron frowned sadly at the girl before her. She conjured what looked a lot like a bottle and handed it gently to Hermione. Hermione immediately began suckling from the bottle as Madam Pomfrey turned to the two boys.

"I think we should wait for one of your parents-" She was cut off as Arthur and Molly returned to the infirmary. They saw that Hermione was awake and smiled before seeing the sad smile on Madam Pomfrey's face.

"What's wrong Poppy?" Arthur asked as he moved to stand next to his son. Molly moved next to Daniel and placed a comforting hand on his shoulder.

Madam Pomfrey frowned before turning back to Hermione. "I've finally identified the spell she was hit with. It was a full erasure obliviation. She has no memory left. She's a newborn child stuck in an adult body."

"Is there anyway to cure her?" Daniel asked as he looked in horror at his friend.

"I'm afraid not. We can only hope to re-teach her everything she's lost." Madam Pomfrey said as she started to tear up, very out of character.

Beside Daniel, Molly had also begun to cry openly. "The poor girl. She has no memories of her parents." The truth of these words came crashing down onto everyone gathered and they looked at Hermione as she finished her bottle.

"What's going to happen to her Madam Pomfrey?" Daniel asked curiously as he moved back to Hermione's side and stroked her hand. She burped loudly and giggled happily.

"I'm not sure, it's out of my hands. She will either go to her closest living relatives or, go to a magical family able to take care of her." Hermione smiled happily at people around her before leaning her head back and closing her eyes.

"Is there anything we can do Madam Pomfrey?" Ron asked desperately looking at the girl who had been his best friend.

"I'm afraid there's not much, just be there for her."

**BREAK**

The absence of thirty five students was glaringly obvious to the older students as they took their seats in the Great Hall for dinner. Most of the hall was silent, everyone suffering through their own type of mourning. Even the Slytherin's who hadn't lost a single member were, for the most part quiet and contemplative. All except for Draco

Malfoy, who was grinning widely and pointing towards empty spots at other tables and snickering with Crabbe and Goyle.

Ginny saw this and was instantly enraged. Without a hint of remorse she fired a wandless stinging hex through a gap in the tables and hit Malfoy right in the crotch. Malfoy leapt almost a meter off the bench howling in agony. His shouts drew the attention of most of the hall. Malfoy gripped himself through his pants gently. He looked pale and seemed on the verge of vomiting.

This seemed to be exactly what the hall needed, and one by one the students started laughing, until finally the hall was filled with laughter. Malfoy attempted to glare one last time at the rest of the hall before running out, still gripping himself.

Harry smiled mischievously at his triumphant looking girlfriend. "Nice shot, Love." Ginny smirked back at him and kissed him lightly on the cheek, sending her thanks through the bond.

The hall quieted as Dumbledore, Lily, James, and Professor McGonagall entered the Great Hall and moved to the head table. "Attention students! I have several announcements to make!" When he was sure he had the attention of the entire hall Dumbledore continued.

"I must first express my deepest sorrow for what happened last night. It is my duty to ensure your safety while at Hogwarts, and I failed last night. However, I am working to ensure that nothing like last night ever happens again!" He paused to let his words sink in before continuing. "I have chosen to reinstate the by-laws on which Hogwarts was founded!"

He paused once again and Harry noticed a movement at the Gryffindor table. Several heads had automatically turned to where Hermione normally sat looking for an explanation. Hermione wasn't there though, and Harry wasn't sure if she would ever return.

"By these laws, I as Headmaster gain full control over all aspects of this school, and anything that occurs on its grounds." He paused and looked pointedly at Harry. Harry understood immediately what he was implying and granted Dumbledore a grateful smile.

"By the rights granted to me in the by-laws I have decided to make some changes at Hogwarts." The room tensed wondering what Dumbledore had planned. "First I have dissolved the Board of Governors. They no longer have any power over Hogwarts. Secondly I have created two new classes for all students Second year of higher." Dumbledore paused as whispers broke out around the room.

"The first will be Dueling, graciously taught by James Potter and Sirius Black!" There was mild applause and excited talking as the students pointed towards where James was standing, and Sirius was sitting at the head table. "Second there will be Healing. Elizabeth Black has graciously accepted, and will be teaching this class." Harry and Ginny were among the loudest cheering for Elizabeth as she stood up from her spot at the head table and waved politely.

"I have one final announcement. Madam Delores Umbridge, who was supposed to begin teaching Defense Against the Dark Arts this semester, has been detained. Therefore, Miss Nymphadora Tonks and Mr. Remus Lupin will be teaching in her stead until she returns." The hall erupted in cheers, Remus had been the best defense teacher any of them had had.

"The last twenty-four hours has been difficult for all of us. We must not let these attacks sway us or allow our fear to control us. For those who died we must stand strong against Voldemort and his forces! We must continue living our lives, but we will always remember those we lost." The students in the hall cheered loudly and Dumbledore looked out on them proudly. Behind him the teachers cheered him on as well.

In the midst of the crowd Harry and Ginny clapped politely, their expressions guarded as they carefully observed the Headmaster.

**BREAK**

**Village Attacked!**

**No Survivors!**

Coming only hours after the Hogwarts Massacre, news has arrived that an entire muggle village has been wiped out. Ministry officials

are scrambling trying desperately to come up with a believable cover story. Inside sources say that Minister Fudge has been in close contact with the current British Prime Minister. The muggles unfortunately moved their military into the village before a sufficient number of Aurors and Ministry personal could arrive. Fortunately, the muggle military has been keeping muggle new reporters away from the destruction and been calling the attack a terrorist attack.

The death toll counting the Hogwarts Massacre and the village attack now stands at 324. The ministry is still holding to the fact that these attacks were committed by crazed former death eaters, using Dumbledore's recent fear mongering as a cover. So far no Dark Marks have been seen over either the Hogwarts Massacre or the recent village attack, leading this reporter to believe that You-Know-Who wasn't behind either attack.

The Prophet will continue to cover both stories as more information emerges.

### Hogwarts Board of Governors Dissolved!

Shortly after 2pm today letters arrived at the homes of the thirteen current Governors of Hogwarts. Each one stated that they were no longer required in the running of Hogwarts and had been officially fired. No further explanation was given, though one governor was quick to comment that the Hogwarts by-laws had most likely been reinstated.

Lucius Malfoy, a former governor, was reached for comment at his home where he is recovering from terrible wounds inflicted two days ago during a potions incident.

"It seems to me that Dumbledore is desperately clawing to retain his power. I wouldn't be surprised if this attack was merely a cover so that Dumbledore could gain even more power. I feel I may need to withdraw my son, Draco, from Hogwarts if this mad rush for power continues."

Similar statements were made by several other families after recent revelations. What Dumbledore has done at Hogwarts is still mostly unknown, but this paper promises to dig further into the matter until the truth is revealed.



a/n

There you got the next chapter! We hit over 1000 reviews! The last chapter had over 100 reviews by itself!

Not much to say, just sorry about the long wait.

Read and Review!

## Chapter 21: This is For Real.

"FOOLS!" Spittle flew from Voldemort's mouth as he screamed relentlessly at the groveling Death Eaters before him. He flicked his wand and sent a Crucio randomly into the crowd, pleased when someone started screaming in agony.

"How difficult is it to attack a group of school children?" Not a single Death Eater moved as Voldemort stalked back and forth in front of them. "FOURTEEN! Fourteen of my loyal servants were killed by two school children! Three of you were gravely injured." He stopped in front of a blonde haired figure. "Lucius lost his leg to the Potter brat and barely survived to return to my service!" He kicked the groveling form of Lucius Malfoy squarely in the ribs.

"You all failed me. Do not let it happen again, otherwise there will be dire consequences. Am I understood?" There was a chorus of affirmative responses and Voldemort glared at the mass of black robes cowering around him. "Good, now all of you leave my sight, except for my inner circle. We must plan our next attack."

It only took a minute for the majority of the Death Eater to apparate out of the main chamber of Voldemort's lair. Voldemort sat on his throne looking out hatefully at the remaining Death Eaters. They quivered under his gaze and glanced down at the ground whenever his eyes were on them.

"I expected more from you. Bella, you had one simple mission. Kill Daniel Potter, and you couldn't even accomplish that." Bellatrix shuffled nervously expecting punishment. It never came as Voldemort turned next to Lucius. "Lucius, all I asked was that you bring me Harry Potter. Instead you allowed he and his whore to kill fourteen of my Death Eaters, and remove your leg. You're lucky I believe that is punishment enough."

"My Lord, those two were unlike anything we'd ever encountered. They were expertly trained and moved as if they knew exactly what the other was doing. Their defense was perfect, nothing we did could hit them." Lucius tried to explain, but Voldemort simply turned red in the face.

"I was going to let you off easy, but now Lucius... Crucio!" Malfoy fell to the ground screaming in agony, his silver arm and leg glinting in

the light as they twitched and flailed. "Let that be a lesson to never fail me again Lucius."

"Y-Yes milord."

"Now then, we must plan our next attack. Let them know that this small setback has not affected us." The remaining Death Eaters gathered closer as Voldemort began slowly outlining his plans.

Harry calmly pushed the door to the Headmasters office open and he and Ginny entered hand in hand. This had become a common sight since the attack. Neither Harry nor Ginny broke physical contact except to go to the bathroom, or sleep. So when they looked at the two wooden seats prepared for them and Ginny lazily flicked her wand conjuring a comfy looking loveseat, no one really said anything.

It was almost the exact same gathering as two days ago, except the Ministry officials were no longer present. Harry and Ginny guardedly scanned the rest of the group, their gaze only softening when they reached Lily, Mrs. Weasley, and Mr. Weasley. Dumbledore sat with Professors McGonagall and Snape who appeared to be representing the Order of the Phoenix. Harry and Ginny had been ambushed after dinner on their way to the common room. Snape, McGonagall, and James had managed to corner them a short distance from the Great Hall.

Once Harry and Ginny had taken their seats the room as a whole turned to Dumbledore. Harry and Ginny looked to him only because they assumed he was the ring leader, and the rest were there as witnesses. Dumbledore was unfazed by the sudden attention and gave everyone his best grandfatherly smile. That damned twinkle that was quickly getting on Harry and Ginny's nerves was brighter than ever.

"Harry, Ginevra, I'm so glad the two of you could make it tonight." Dumbledore began.

Ginny bristled at his use of her full name and Harry snorted ruefully next to her while mumbling, "Not like we had much of a choice." This gained them disapproving frowns from McGonagall, and Mrs. Weasley. They chose to ignore the frowns and concentrate on Dumbledore.

"I'd like to ask your forgiveness for our last meeting. I did not expect Madam Umbridge to be so... so... blatant in her attacks on you. If I had known I never would have allowed her into the discussion."

"Hindsight is always twenty-twenty Headmaster." Ginny threw in quickly before Dumbledore could continue.

He appeared momentarily thrown off before he smiled kindly and continued. "So it is, so it is. As you can see however, no one from the Ministry has been invited to this meeting." He paused and indicated the rest of the group in his office. "We are all very anxious to hear your version of events. I will admit that it is quite unsettling to have two students murder fourteen people."

Dumbledore knew almost immediately he'd said something wrong as Harry and Ginny straightened and glared at him. Ginny was the first to break the nervous silence that had settled on the group. "It wasn't murder! It was self defense, and you can barely call those... those monsters, people!"

"Regardless you killed fourteen people Ms. Weasley. That is simply unacceptable behavior."

"What would you have us do then Headmaster? Let them kill us?" Everyone in the room looked to see Dumbledore's response, a few had voiced this same question to the Headmaster before, with varying responses.

"We are magical Mr. Potter. You were obviously skilled enough to beat them, you should have stunned them and captured them."

"Voldemort would have them out of jail in less than a week. At least this way we know they're out of the fight for good."

"You still took a life Harry. You sunk to their level and have become just as bad as they are." This sentence obviously shocked a majority of the people in the room and Lily even gasped angrily.

"No it doesn't. There's a difference. Voldemort and his followers kill for sport. We killed to protect those we love. I expected someone as wise as you to know the difference." For the second time Harry and

Ginny stood and left the Headmaster's office without being properly dismissed, and leaving a slightly stunned crowd behind them.

The next morning all the students and many of the families of those who had been killed or injured gathered on the front lawn of Hogwarts. Harry and Ginny sat quietly near the back of the crowd. A Ravenclaw in Ginny's year had died and Ginny felt the depression at losing a friend. Large moving pictures of all those who had died were set up in front of the gathered crowd, and each family had a representative speak about the person they lost.

Harry recognized a few of the names and a lot of the faces but for the most part no one close to him had been lost. As the Gryffindor's began to talk about those lost Harry saw a face he recognized. Colin Creevey, a boy that had followed Daniel around for several years.

"He was nice. We had Charms together, I don't think he could hurt a fly. He didn't deserve that." Ginny whispered quietly next to Harry. Mr. Creevey who had been honoring his son stepped down a few seconds later and embraced his wife and remaining son.

The person up after Colin was Hermione. She hadn't died, but she had suffered a fate almost as bad. Harry and Ginny had seen her as she was escorted off the grounds by Madam Pomfrey and some healers from St. Mungos. She'd been sitting in a wheel chair giggling happily as she played with a rattle. There was an obvious bulge of what appeared to be a diaper under her sweatpants.

For several quiet seconds no one stood to speak on Hermione's behalf. As the minute mark approached Daniel rose from his seat and made his way towards the front of the crowd. Mild applause from some of the students and parents met his approach to the stand. Dumbledore placed a sonorous charm on him as he passed.

"Hello. Hermione's parents couldn't be here to speak for her because they were unfortunately killed in an attack on a muggle village the same night as the attack here. As such I'll be talking about my good friend Hermione." Daniel paused and took a deep breath. "Hermione was a book-worm. There was nothing that she didn't know. If she wasn't in classes studying she was in the library studying. It was a constant struggle for Ron and I to get her to come have fun with us."

"Hermione was one of my best friends and I'll never forget her. I hope one day to have her back as my friend, but thanks to the Death Eaters she's been forced to literally start her life over. I can only hope I can make it through my OWL's this year without her." Daniel smiled and looked at the picture of Hermione over his shoulder. His smile turned into a frown quickly and even from the back Harry could see a tear slip down his cheek.

After Daniel had returned to his seat there were only four students left to be memorialized. Once the final speaker had sat down the audience stood and walked solemnly into the Great Hall for lunch. As a show of resilience and to prove that the community could grieve but still move on with their lives, classes were to resume immediately after lunch.

Dueling was to be held in a large classroom on the third floor that hadn't been used in almost a decade. When Harry arrived there were several dueling circles set up around the room. He was quickly joined by Neville and the two took up position by one of the dueling circles. The room only took a few minutes to fill with students. A few minutes after the bell Sirius and James rushed into the classroom breathing heavily from running.

"Sorry we're late class, we had to er, set something up." Sirius said as he shared a conspiratorially smile with James. Harry took this as a sign too subtly check himself and his surroundings for a prank waiting to be sprung. When he found nothing he returned his attention to his father who was speaking.

"To begin today we'll have everyone in the class duel their partners while Professor Black and I walk amongst you seeing how well you can already duel." The class began to whisper excitedly and Harry noticed Neville glance over at him nervously.

"Don't worry. You'll do fine Nev." Neville smiled nervously and stepped up onto the platform. Harry stepped up across from him and bowed formally to his partner.

Neville started the duel by throwing stunners and other low level hexes at Harry. Harry easily blocked them and would occasionally send a stunner back at Neville. After a few minutes Neville's attacks began to slow down. Harry was barely even raising a shield

anymore and instead was just dodging and avoiding the poorly aimed, sporadic spells.

It only took a few minutes before Harry got bored and began glancing at the other duels around him. This proved to almost be a big mistake. The second his attention wavered Neville began rapid firing stunners at Harry that were dead on target. Harry barely had time to raise a shield deflecting the volley of spells. He smirked as Neville sighed in defeat, while watching the last of his stunners bounce harmlessly into the floor.

"Nice try Nev." Harry smirked and in the blink of an eye sent nearly twenty disarming spells at Neville preventing him from moving. Neville tried to raise a shield but only managed to block the first few before his shield collapsed. Neville's wand shot out of his hand and Harry nimbly picked it out of the air.

Harry hurried over to where Neville was laying on the ground and helped his friend off the floor. "Really that was a great try Nev, I thought you had me for a second there." Harry said as he gave Neville his wand back. Before Neville could say anything someone behind them began clapping.

"Good show of sportsmanship Harry." Sirius said as he walked onto the dueling platform. "That was a nice try Neville. Leading Harry into a false sense of security then just unleashing on him. Most opponents would have fallen for that." Neville blushed under the praise. "Do you mind Neville if I duel my godson?"

A few seconds later and Sirius had taken Neville's spot on the dueling platform. Harry bowed respectfully to his godfather and Sirius returned the bow. A quick glance told Harry that most of the duelists around them had stopped to watch them.

Sirius and Harry circled each other looking for an opening to attack. Sirius opened fire first sending a stunner directly towards where Harry would have been and one at where he was currently standing.

Harry rolled under the first one not having to worry about the second one. He came up from his roll already wordlessly flicking a stunner at Sirius. Sirius sidestepped it easily, but had to hastily throw up a shield to block the disarming spell that Harry had sent right after the

stunner. Harry rolled forward, towards Sirius, right under a stunner. He countered with two stunners of his own which Sirius blocked.

Sirius began flinging spells like crazy at this point, all of them well aimed. Harry was a blur of movement rolling, ducking, and diving out of the way of spells. It was only after he'd fired the last spell that Sirius realized his mistake. All of Harry's movements had been bringing him strategically closer to Sirius. As he finished his last roll, Harry swept out one leg and kicked Sirius' right out from under him.

Unprepared for the physical attack Sirius had no time to brace himself and came crashing down. Harry's hand shot out like lightning and pulled Sirius' wand out of his hand before he'd even finished his fall. Harry then rolled backwards and into a standing position both wands pointed at Sirius.

The room erupted in applause and cheers. Harry glanced around to see that everyone in the room had been watching his duel. James stood at the edge of the dueling ring looking highly impressed by Harry's win. Harry stepped forward and bent down to help his godfather up off the floor.

"Brilliant work Harry. I never expected you to come at me with a physical attack." Sirius said as he accepted his wand back from Harry. "That was a perfect demonstration of why you don't always need a spell to win a duel. Ten points to Ravenclaw Harry." Harry nodded his thanks and started to walk off the platform towards where Neville was standing.

As he passed James, he felt a hand on his arm stopping him momentarily and looked suspiciously at his father. "Good job Harry."

Not sure how to respond Harry simply nodded and continued off the stage. Once he rejoined Neville they watched amusedly as Sirius and James dueled each other. Later many of the students would debate who had won. James disarmed Sirius first, but Sirius turned James pink and green. Not to mention the rainbow colored afro James walked away with.

After Dueling class Harry had Healing. To say Harry was excited for this class would be an understatement, he was ecstatic. Not because of the class itself though. It was because of who else was in the class.



Dumbledore had decided to introduce Healing as an elective course. Since it was the first year, Elizabeth had decided to combine all pre-OWL years together. This meant that for the first time since starting at Hogwarts, Harry and Ginny would have a class together.

They both seemed to be floating on air as they moved from their first classes towards the classroom next to the infirmary where Elizabeth had set up. Harry waited outside the door for Ginny who took a little longer getting from the dungeons up to the Hospital Wing. Harry greeted her with a quick kiss and his hand melding to hers. The physical contact almost immediately comforted both of them.

Once inside they found what looked like a muggle science classroom. Tables that sat two people each took up most of the room, while the walls were covered with pictures of the human body, both external and internal. At the front of the classroom two human skeletons hung from hooks next to the blackboard. Harry and Ginny both found a seat near the front of the classroom and pushed the chairs as close as they could.

When Elizabeth entered the classroom a few minutes later Ginny was resting her head peacefully in the crook of Harry's neck while he draped his arm across her shoulders. She couldn't help but smile at the pair as they portrayed the perfect image of happiness. Once at the front of the classroom she finally had a chance to look out at the group of forty or so students seated in pairs throughout the room.

"Welcome to Healing. I'm your Professor, Elizabeth Black. I'll be helping to instruct you in the delicate art of Healing. Many other professor's will tell you their subject is a delicate art and is extremely complicated. Compared to Healing, none of them are. You will be using this branch of magic on living people, if anything goes wrong, you could kill a person. This is not for the faint of heart."

It was obvious she had the rapt attention of everyone in the classroom, even Ginny had picked her head up to listen attentively to Elizabeth. "We will begin with a two week look at the human body. You need to first know what you're dealing with before actually working with it. So unfortunately no wands for the first few weeks."

After that was almost an hour of looking over pictures of the human body. At the end of class they were told they would be having a test on the human skeletal system next class.

The next morning when Harry and Ginny made their way towards the Great Hall for breakfast they watched a rather interesting interaction between Harry's godparents. Sirius and Elizabeth had literally walked into each other at the bottom of the staircase in the Great Hall. Neither even knew they'd crashed into the other until Sirius looked up from the papers he'd been helping Elizabeth collect.

"Oh, uh... Hi Liz." Sirius tried to smile feebly and Elizabeth returned a polite smile.

"Good morning Sirius. Um... I have to go." Before Sirius could stop her Elizabeth disappeared into the Great Hall.

'They both still love each other.' Ginny said mentally as they watched a dejected Sirius look longingly at the doors Elizabeth had just disappeared through.

'Yea they do. I think they need a little push in the right direction though.'

Ginny glanced over at Harry and quirked an eyebrow. 'Oh, and just what exactly do you have planned?'

Harry's only response was to smile wickedly and start leading Ginny down the stairs towards the Great Hall.

"Harry?" Sirius called out as he walked into the seemingly deserted classroom. He'd received a letter from Harry asking to meet him in the seldom used classroom. Glancing around it was obvious that Harry wasn't there, so he sat down to wait.

A few minutes later the door opened again and Sirius stood up, with a large smile on his face, to greet Harry. When he saw who'd entered the classroom though his face immediately fell. Standing a few feet in from the doorway was Elizabeth, probably the last person in the world he wanted to see at the moment. Elizabeth's eyes fell on him a few seconds later and also widened in surprise.

"Sirius, what are you doing here?" She glanced around as if expecting someone to jump out at her.

"I got a letter from Harry asking me to meet him here. He said he was having relationship problems." Sirius stopped at Elizabeth's eyes widened in understanding.

"Ginny sent me a letter asking me to meet her here. Her reason was relationship troubles too." This time it was Sirius' turn to nod in understanding.

"Those two are in so much trouble for this little stunt." Sirius said as he walked towards the door. He'd barely taken two steps when the door snapped shut and the lock clicked into place.

After a few minutes of unsuccessfully trying to open the door, an advanced form of magic had been used to seal it, Sirius slumped down into a seat glaring at the door. Elizabeth had watched the entire spectacle in mild interest from her perch on the large teachers desk at the front of the room. She knew that if Harry and Ginny wanted them locked together in a classroom they should be happy it wasn't a broom closet.

"Well, how on earth are we supposed to get out of here?" Sirius asked in exasperation. He wasn't ready for an answer to his question to begin writing itself on the board.

'Kiss and make up.'

Sirius and Elizabeth both looked at the scribbled message in disbelief for a second. Finally Elizabeth started laughing hysterically, which in turn made Sirius look at her like she was insane.

"They've got to be kidding. I swear when I get out of here I'm going turn both of them pink." Sirius said to no one in particular.

'Only if you can catch us, you old mutt.'

Sirius huffed in indignation at the new message on the blackboard and glared at Elizabeth who had only laughed harder at the message.

"What is so funny?" Sirius finally yelled as he lost his patience.

"Only that our darling godson and goddaughter-in-law are stubborn enough to keep us locked in this room until we do just as they say and 'kiss and make up'. I wouldn't be surprised if they have a way of delivering food to us." Elizabeth said when she'd finally calmed down from her laughing fit.

In response to her suggestion a plate of fruit appeared on the desk next to her and more writing appeared on the board:

'We knew she was the brains of your marriage.'

Sirius gave the board a look of mock outrage, before his features softened slightly. "That wasn't hard to tell, she was always the serious intelligent one. I was the goofball jock."

Elizabeth granted Sirius a kind smile before speaking. "You weren't always a goofball... You were better than me in Defense. Besides, most of your pranks were funny."

"Thanks Liz." The room was quickly filled with an awkward silence as Sirius and Elizabeth did their best to look anywhere but each other.

After a minute of the silence an ornate pensieve appeared on the desk next to the plate of fruit. Sirius and Elizabeth both looked at it in confusion before writing appeared on the board.

'Memories can't be changed. Show her Sirius.'

Sirius' eyes widened in understanding and he strode over to the pensieve. He quickly pulled a memory out of his temple and put it into the pensieve. Without explaining anything he grabbed Elizabeth's hand and pulled her into the pensieve.

The real Elizabeth and Sirius appeared in a dark bedroom. The only light came from the window where street lights and some moonlight gave off an ambient glow. In the middle of the room was a bed with a darkened lump breathing heavily. Besides that the room was empty.

Sirius and Elizabeth watched the sleeping form for a few seconds before movement by the window drew their attention. The window

slowly opened just a crack, barely large enough for a bug to fly in. They couldn't really see what was outside the window, the memory was limited to just the room. They both saw the beetle that flew through the open window a few minutes later though.

Elizabeth watched in horror as the beetle transformed into Rita Skeeter. She was dressed simply in a robe and there didn't appear to be anything else under it. This was proved a few seconds later when Skeeter ditched the robe and climbed onto the bed. The lump in the bed stirred slightly and rolled over towards the new source of warmth.

Elizabeth already knew the sleeping form was Sirius, but this was confirmed when his face moved out of the shadows into the ray of light from the window. His eyes slowly fluttered open as he registered the extra weight on the bed.

"You're home late Liz. Problem at the hospital?" Sirius said as he wrapped his arm around the shadowy form of Rita Skeeter, not knowing the problem yet.

"Sorry buddy, wrong girl." Skeeter whispered evilly.

Sirius recoiled almost instantly and was about to say something when a ray of light appeared under the door to the bedroom. In his moment of distraction Sirius was taken surprise when Skeeter latched her lips onto his. The door slowly creaked open and Liz stuck her head in.

The real Elizabeth and Sirius watched the look of horror and devastation that replaced the smile on Elizabeth's face. That look only lasted a few seconds before rage and anger overtook it. A wand just seemed to appear in her hand and she took two steps into the room.

"SIRIUS ORION BLACK!" Elizabeth screamed as she leveled her wand at Sirius who was still struggling to escape Skeeter's vice like grip. He'd managed to get her lips off his, but she still clung to him, pretending to look startled and afraid.

"Liz it's not what looks like! I swear!" Liz was infuriated, and not listening to reason. She flicked her wand and banished both Sirius and Skeeter backwards into the wall.

"We're through Black! I never want to see you again!" Liz screamed before turning on the spot and disappearing.

Once Liz was gone, Sirius stared despairingly at the spot she'd just disappeared from while Skeeter regained her feet. "Well, not that she's gone we can finally be together. Right lover?"

Sirius turned an enraged face to Skeeter who backed away slightly. "WHO ARE YOU? How dare you enter my house!"

Skeeter took a step backwards away from Sirius, a look of fear flashing across her features. "It's me, Rita. We were in Hogwarts together. I was a year below you..."

Sirius stared blankly at her for a second before shaking his head and raising his wand. "I'm giving you exactly two seconds to get out of my house and never come back. If I ever see your face again, I swear I'll kill you."

Skeeter stared at Sirius for a second before summoning her robe and running as fast as she could out of the room. A second later Sirius summoned a pair of sweatpants and apparated out of the house.

Sirius and Elizabeth reappeared out of the pensieve and just looked at each other for a minute. Finally tears began pouring out of Elizabeth's eyes as she slumped down onto her knees. Sirius was next to her in almost a second wrapping an arm comfortingly around her shoulders.

"I'm sorry. I'm so sorry!" Elizabeth sobbed as she cried into Sirius' shirt. "I should have listened. I should have talked to you! Instead I just ran away. I'm so sorry!"

"It's okay Liz. I won't hold any of it against you. I'd have done the same thing if I'd walked in on a scene like that. It's not your fault, it's that bitch Skeeter's fault." Sirius soothed as he rubbed small circles on Elizabeth's back.

"I should never have just left like that. Even after all that I still loved you. I just thought that you were with another woman. I'm sorry. I should have stayed."

"I told you I don't care. We found each other now, and we both know the truth. That's all that matters." Sirius said and gently kissed the top of Elizabeth's head. They sat in a comfortable silence for awhile as Elizabeth's tears slowed and finally stopped.

"I never stopped looking." Sirius said after a few minutes. Elizabeth turned her head slightly to look at him and he continued. "I never stopped looking for you. Even after ten years of not finding anything, I knew you were still out there somewhere. I only found out where you were about a year ago. I'd been trying to psyche myself up enough to go talk to you. Then Harry, Ginny, and Lily disappeared and I just knew where they'd gone." Sirius fell silent and began idly playing with a strand of Elizabeth's hair.

"I always thought about going back. I wanted to talk to you, find out if it was really true. I was afraid that I'd get to your house and some strange woman would open the door with a little boy who looked like you in her arms. I was so afraid you'd moved on, I couldn't come back to see you. I finally got enough courage to send Lily a letter asking about Harry. I avoided asking about you for months. Then one day she showed up at my door, and a few days later you followed."

Sirius and Elizabeth both fell into a comfortable silence, cuddled up against each other on the floor of the abandoned classroom. After a few minutes Sirius took a deep breath and spoke. "So you want to give us another shot? See if we can't get things to work like they used to?"

Sirius had barely finished the question when Elizabeth's lips were pressed up against his. He slowly fell backwards until Elizabeth was laying on top of him, her hands buried in his hair, while his rested gently on her hips.

After about a minute Elizabeth pulled back for air, and Sirius smiled up smugly. "So is that a yes or a no?"

Elizabeth laughed happily before crushing her lips against his once again.

Neither noticed the door to the classroom click open and swing inwards slowly. They were too busy reacquainting themselves with each other.

A month later the day Harry and Ginny had been dreading arrived. Umbridge returned to teaching classes. Defense class had up until that point been the most popular class in school. Remus and Tonks complemented each other perfectly. Remus was the serious bookworm, while Tonks was the fun loving outgoing type. There was a school wide pool on how long it would take the two to get together.

The night before she was to return to teaching Umbridge appeared at the Head Table for dinner. She spent the majority of the meal glaring at Harry. He ignored her rather thoroughly, much more interested in the conversation he was having with Ginny and Luna about the healing spells Elizabeth had begun teaching them.

The next day as fate would have it, Harry had Defense immediately after breakfast. He took a seat as far away from the front as possible. Michael Corner, the boy who had been riding in his carriage with him, ended up next to him. The two made small talk until Umbridge waddled into the room a few minutes after the bell.

"Greetings students, I'm Professor Umbridge. I also serve as undersecretary to the Minister of Magic." Umbridge croaked as she looked out over the class.

Harry couldn't resist and quietly whispered under his breath. "I bet she loves being under the Minister." Michael heard him and shoved his fist into his mouth to keep himself from laughing loudly at the comment.

Michael's efforts were in vain and Umbridge had spotted the movement of his hand. "My. Potter, Mr..." She glanced down at a magical chart she had showing which student was sitting where. "Corner, did I say something funny?"

"No Professor." Both boys chorused giving their best innocent looks.

"I didn't think so. Now as I was saying we will be concentrating on the theory behind Defense spells. Open your books to chapter one and begin reading." The majority of the class moved to follow the



order while Harry simply pulled his book in front of him and sat with it closed in front of him.

Umbridge waddled around the classroom, making sure they were all working, and reached Harry's desk last. "Mr. Potter, why aren't you reading the given assignment."

"I already read the first chapter, Professor." Harry responded looking rather bored with the entire situation.

Umbridge narrowed her bulbous eyes, which amounted to making them look like a normal set of eyes. "Well then Mr. Potter, perhaps you should read the next chapter. You really should learn to take the initiative on some things. You're too much of a follower."

Harry narrowed his eyes. "I already finished the textbook Professor. May I ask a question about the book?"

Umbridge smiled and waved her hand for Harry to continue as she said, "Of course dear."

"Why are we using a book that hasn't been updated since the 1950's? Surely the Undersecretary for the Minister of Magic could find a more up to date book." There were murmured agreements from the rest of the class, but Umbridge simply smiled happily.

"I don't like your attitude Potter. Ten points from Ravenclaw, and a detention with me tonight."

Harry simply couldn't resist the urge to throw one last insult in. "I'm sorry Professor, but I have a girlfriend. I'm not interested in you like that."

"You arrogant little child. That remark will cost you another ten points, and detention for the rest of the week." Umbridge glared at him, daring him to say something.

Harry opened his mouth to retort when Ginny's voice echoed in his head. 'Harry shut up! I'd like to see you at least once outside of meals this month.' Harry took her advice and firmly closed his mouth, allowing Umbridge to walk away with a victorious smirk on her wart covered face.

It turned out Ginny's worries were unfounded. She managed to get a weeks detentions with Umbridge quicker than Harry had. It appeared Umbridge had it out for Harry and Ginny. Ginny had been talking with Luna before the class started and Umbridge had singled her out. When Ginny had finally lost her temper, calling Umbridge a disgusting toad-woman, she'd quickly received a weeks worth of detentions with Harry.

Harry and Ginny arrived at the door to Umbridge's office a minute early for their detention and knocked regretfully on the door. Umbridge opened the door smiling wickedly at the two of them. She ushered them into the garishly pink room and pointed them to two desks facing each other.

"Now then, I want you to write 'I will respect those better than me.' Until I tell you to stop." Harry and Ginny looked at the parchment stacked on the desk in front of them. Then Ginny's eyes fell on the quill next to the parchment.

"Professor Umbridge, are you sure you want us using these quills?" Umbridge looked suspiciously at Ginny, as Harry looked down at the quill on the desk in front of him.

"Of course dear. What else would you use?"

Ginny picked the quill up and turned it around slowly in her hands. "Well Professor, this is a Blood Quill. If you were to have Harry or I actually use it, well the list of charges we could bring against you is staggering. Assault on a minor, torture, possession of a dark object, just to name a few."

Umbridge sneered at Ginny, and as fast as she could waddled around the desk and snatched the two quills from Harry and Ginny. "Fine use regular quills. Write the same sentence until I tell you to stop."

Harry and Ginny spent the next four hours writing lines, they spent the majority of the time playing a game of I Spy using the multitude of kitten plates on the wall. Umbridge was never any the wiser.

The next morning most of the Great Hall was having a good time laughing hysterically at Umbridge who had showed up to breakfast, sat down in her seat and simultaneously turned into a large pink

toad. No one was sure who had done it, although many suspected the Weasley Twins. Only the few who knew what kind of magical knowledge that would take suspected anyone else. Dumbledore, Lily, James, Sirius, and Elizabeth guessed right when they looked suspiciously towards Harry and Ginny.

While the teachers were halfheartedly trying to reverse the spells that had transformed Umbridge, something Ginny and Harry had made sure lasted a week, the owl post arrived. Neither Harry, Ginny, nor Luna received a copy of the Daily Prophet, but Lisa Turpin did. She and Michael Corner had taken to sitting with Harry, Ginny, and Luna during meals and classes since Harry and Ginny had saved them during the Hogwarts Massacre.

So when the morning edition arrived and Lisa gasped loudly after reading the headline, it didn't take long to figure out why.

**5 Aurors, 40 Muggles, Killed!**

Shortly after 8pm last night a muggle police station in London was attacked by a group of unknown dark wizards and witches. It is believed this may be the same group that attacked Hogwarts earlier this year.

Shortly after the attack began, five Aurors arrived on the scene. There is currently a lack of information, and it is unknown what happened, but after arriving the five Aurors were killed in the line of duty. Most of the Auror department had just returned home for the night when the call came in, so it is believe that the five Aurors were most likely heavily outnumbered.

The police station, the muggle version of an Auror, was utterly destroyed in the attack, and Muggle authorities believe it to be a gas leak. Early reports show that at least two of the Dark wizards were killed during the attack. At least one was killed by a muggle weapon, called a gun.

Minister of Magic Cornelius Fudge, called this attack "a horrible incident," and promised that the Aurors were close to catching those responsible.

The Daily Prophet would like to offer its condolences to the families of those Aurors who died last night. More information in tonight's Evening Edition.

A/N:

I'm Back!

Finals are done, and I'm free for the summer! as a present I've given you chapter 21, or 22 whatever the hell we're up to!

My chapter title, and that little intro is because i was just at a Panic at the Disco concert, and Motion City Soundtrack was there, so i've had their songs stuck in my head all weekend.

The dedication at the top, is because some guy tried to plagiarize my work and those two were kind enough to inform me. I'm pretty sure those sites the guy posted on have taken his stuff down or made him change it.

I hope you enjoy the new chapter, we're over 1200 reviews now!

Be Kind: Review!

## Chapter 22: Making Progress

Disclaimer: I own nothing. Except the stuff that i thought of...

It was less than a day later when parents began pulling their children out of school. The first to go were the Patil twins, whose father had been seen screaming at Dumbledore in the Entrance Hall as the Headmaster tried to talk them out of leaving. Less than a day later Terry Boot was pulled out of Hogwarts. Over the next two weeks nearly twenty more students were pulled out of Hogwarts, including the remaining Creevey brother.

It was only a week later that twenty out of twenty four first year Auror recruits were found murdered in their homes. The other four had been on an all night training mission and come home to find their homes destroyed and any family members who had been there, dead.

Harry and Ginny couldn't predict the attacks and were forced to wait for breakfast each morning to see which new tragedy had occurred during the night. It had begun to drive them insane, being cooped up in the heavily warded castle while outside people were dying. Harry's sleep was plagued by nightmares, so Ginny's were also plagued by nightmares. The only problem was that each morning neither could remember what exactly had happened in the dreams and occlumency was of no use.

Two weeks after the attack on the London police station, a military base was hit. A large unknown amount of Death Eaters apparated right into the main barracks in the dead of night. Dozens of soldiers were killed while they were still sleeping. The Death Eaters didn't wait around once the soldiers had recovered from the initial attack, and apparated out the instant any resistance presented itself. The muggle papers had called it a terrorist attack, stating the cause of death for fifteen soldiers as suicide bombing.

Within days the Ministry and most wizarding media sources had taken the term terrorist and begun applying it to every attack. This had the effect of causing even more fear within the populace. No one was safe unless they were sided with Voldemort. Rumors gradually began to spread of neutral purebloods and even some brazen halfbloods trying to gain the Dark Lords favor. By the time Christmas rolled around no one was sure who they could trust.

A dark shroud was falling over the wizarding world as the Death Eaters continued to bring more and more destruction on both the muggle and wizarding worlds. Even Harry and Ginny were beginning to feel the task before them was hopeless.

That's why it came as such a huge relief to Harry and Ginny that on Christmas Eve, instead of being pulled into a horrible nightmare of what Voldemort and his lackeys were doing, they found themselves sitting on top of a familiar rock in the middle of a snow frosted Central Park. A few seconds later Razzak and Lisna burst into existence in front of them and settled down on the rock before them.

'Hello children,' Razzak's musical voice entered their minds as they sat closely together grasping each others hands.

"Hello Razzak, hello Lisna." Harry supplied for both of them.

'I sense much fear and hopelessness within you. Why do you fear that which you know you can defeat?' Lisna spoke the underlying trills in her speech bolstering both teens courage.

"Because we don't know if we can beat it." Ginny answered while Harry nodded slowly beside her. "How can we beat something that strikes from the shadows and disappears just as quickly as it had come?" Ginny's voice rose slowly until she was just short of yelling near the end.

Harry nodded beside her before adding his own opinion. "Voldemort attacks with neither rhyme nor reason, how can we possibly predict his attacks when he has no pattern?"

'Harry, Ginny, something you must learn is that there are some people who simply want to watch the world burn. Voldemort is such a person. He doesn't crave power, he gets it from people cowering in fear before him and causing destruction wherever he can. If you wish to defeat him, you first need to believe.'

"Believe what?" Both asked simultaneously.

'Believe in yourself, and believe in each other. But most of all believe in your love. Love can keep the darkness at bay, it can light

up the shadows that you claim Voldemort hides in. Let your love guide you and Voldemort will find it impossible to hide from you.'

Harry and Ginny both looked at the two phoenix in confusion. Their questions had been answered in riddles and neither were sure exactly what they needed to do. But neither had time to ask another question as they felt the all too familiar pulling sensation that signaled their return to consciousness. As they were finally pulled back into the world of the living one last sentence seemed to stick in their heads.

'Light up the Darkness.'

Christmas morning brought with it the news that Voldemort and his followers had once again struck during the night. Several prominent members of the muggle parliament and two members of the Wizengamot had all been murdered in their homes. After opening their presents in a less than joyful mood, Harry and Ginny retreated to the Founders room for the day. Almost before the door had fully closed Harry was venting his frustration on a practice dummy.

After nearly fifteen minutes of pummeling the dummy with everything he had Harry collapsed onto the sofa next to Ginny. She immediately began examining his knuckles which had opened while he was venting and were bleeding. The four founders watched silently as Ginny murmured healing spells under her breath, and Harry's wounds began to close effortlessly under her ministrations.

"I feel so useless Gin. We can't figure out where or when he's attacking so how can we help?" Harry seethed as Ginny laid her head against his shoulder.

"I don't know Harry. If we could figure out a way to get a tracking charm on to the Death Eaters, than maybe we could track them, but that would never work for long." Ginny suggested half heartedly. Above them Godric gave Salazar a pointed look.

"Harry, Ginny there's something you're overlooking." Harry and Ginny both looked up at Sal. "Well all of the Death Eaters are connected through their mark, perhaps if you were able to plant a tracking charm through that, then connected it to a map of some kind..." Sal trailed off as realization seemed to dawn on both Harry and Ginny's faces.

"Then we would have an exact location of every Death Eater, we would know if they were gathering almost as soon as they did. We could be there to stop the attacks. Sal you're a genius!" Harry rambled on excitedly. As he slowed Ginny quickly picked up from where he left off.

"But we would need someone who was marked first. Then we'd have to find the spell, probably tweak it a little. We don't want it to be obvious. A symbiotic spell of some sort, one that would latch on to the primary spell and go undetected."

"Exactly! I'm sure one of the older Slytherins has been marked by now, plus it would give us a better picture of who to trust."

"Come on Harry it could take us all night to find the right spell and modify it correctly." Ginny was off the couch and searching through the substantial amount of books before she was done speaking, and Harry was following along behind her.

It took them an hour to find a spell that would work correctly, and they spent the rest of the night working on all the equations needed to mold it to what they needed. By first light the next morning Harry and Ginny had fallen asleep, curled up together on the couch, the finished spell sitting on the main desk.

The next day Harry and Ginny sat outside the doors to the Great Hall pretending to read a book while waiting for a certain Slytherin to walk by. About thirty minutes after they'd taken up their post, the familiar flash of blonde hair appeared on the stairs from the dungeons. Of course he was followed by his normal lackeys who lumbered along behind them. Malfoy had adapted a burning hatred for Harry and Ginny since they'd maimed his father in combat. This had led to several verbal insults being thrown their way, and Malfoy attempting to begin a confrontation at every opportunity. True to form this was no exception.

"If it isn't the Forgotten Potter, and his blood traitor whore. Tell me Potter, did she make your Christmas a jolly one?" Malfoy sneered, however his sneer quickly faltered.

Harry and Ginny had originally planned on getting into a confrontation with one of the Slytherins, and while one fought, the



other would use the distraction to place the tracking charm. Harry was no longer pretending to fight. In the blink of an eye he was up, his wand in hand. Malfoy had just enough time to twitch his hand towards his wand before he was flying backwards across the Entrance Hall and through the doors of the Great Hall.

Most of the school had of course gone home for the Christmas break, therefore the Great Hall was populated mostly by professors, all of which were stunned into silence as Malfoy rolled to a stop just short of the Head table. James, Sirius, Dumbledore, and Flitwick were up with their wands drawn in seconds, the rest of the Professors responded a little bit slower. Harry appeared in the doorway a second later.

A golden aura flickered around him, and his eyes appeared to glow as he stalked slowly towards Malfoy. Malfoy was struggling to stand and appeared to have broken his wrist. His pale complexion, paled even more as he took in the sight of Harry stalking slowly towards him. It took him several seconds before he realized that he'd wet himself in terror.

Harry stopped a few feet from Malfoy, his wand leveled right between the boys eyes. The two stared at each other for a few seconds, and Harry seemed to be considering what he should do to Malfoy. The tip of his wand had just begun to glow when Ginny appeared in the doorway to the Great Hall. Crabbe and Goyle floated along behind her bound, gagged, and unconscious.

"Harry stop!" Harry lowered his wand instantly and turned to watch Ginny stride towards him. "The little ferret isn't worth it. Besides he's so stupid even the Ministry should be able to catch him." Ginny flicked her wand towards Malfoy and he collapsed sideways as the stunning spell hit him right between the eyes.

The professor's finally seemed to regain their bearings as Malfoy was knocked out and Dumbledore looked sternly down at Harry and Ginny. "Mr. Potter, Ms. Weasley I hope you have a good reason for assaulting three students."

Harry had the decency to look ashamed before the disapproving looks of the teachers, although Sirius was obviously trying to fight back a smile. "Malfoy may not have deserved such a harsh

response to his words, but I believe Ginny was simply defending herself in disarming dumb and dumber."

Ginny nodded and continued the story without missing a beat. "After Harry, blasted Malfoy into the Hall, Crabbe and Goyle tried to hex me. They aren't exactly the fastest spell casters, or very powerful magically, or intelligent at all, and... well... I'd call them squibs but that would be an insult to squibs." This time Sirius let out a snicker which earned him a disapproving glare from McGonagall.

"Headmaster, I hope you will be expelling both these students for their actions today." Umbridge had finally spoken up. "Obviously the girl is lying, Mr. Crabbe and Mr. Goyle have both shown outstanding talent in my class." Harry and Ginny both laughed sarcastically at this statement. "What do you find so funny about your impending expulsion?"

"Oh that's not funny, besides according to the school by-laws a minor confrontation between students will result in five nights detention for all parties involved. We're laughing at the fact that you call what you teach a class. Classes usually involve learning, something you fail to provide in your class."

Before Umbridge had time to respond Dumbledore began speaking. "I'm afraid Madame Umbridge that Harry is correct. In the case of a provoked attack all students involved will receive five nights detention. Mr.'s Malfoy, Crabbe, and Goyle will spend their's with Professor McGonagall, while Mr. Potter and Ms. Weasley will spend theirs with Professor Snape."

Harry and Ginny nodded respectfully to Dumbledore, before turning and rushing out of the Great Hall. They'd barely made it half way up the main stairway on their way to the Founders Room, when Lily exited the Great Hall behind them. She barely had to clear her throat to bring both teens to sudden halt. Harry turned slowly and looked bashfully at his mother.

"Hey mum..." He smiled, but Lily continued to frown at him with her arms crossed in front of her chest.

"I think the three of us need to have a talk." Lily said walking up the stairs. Smiling slightly she grabbed Harry by the ear as she passed

and proceeded to pull him towards her office. Ginny followed along trying not to laugh hysterically at the sight in front of her.

Once they'd reached Lily's office, she released his ear and pointed them towards two empty chairs. After securing the door behind her Lily took her seat glaring challengingly at both of them. "I hope for your sakes that Malfoy did indeed give you a very good reason for attacking him like that Harry."

"He called Ginny a whore mum, and implied that we may have done some things yesterday. I didn't mean to attack him so hard, I just lost my temper."

"Yes, well we'll have to work on you controlling your temper Harry. Now you may continue with what you and Ginny were doing, before I interrupted you. Oh and Harry Happy Christmas, I didn't see you at all yesterday." Lily said with a small frown still marring her features.

Harry and Ginny were immediately on their feet and halfway out the door before Harry looked back at his mother. "Sorry mum, Happy Christmas! We'll see you later." Then they were gone, quickly hurrying towards the Founders Room.

Harry and Ginny entered the Founders Room, greeted the Founders and turned to a large map of England that they had spelled specifically to pick up on the tracking charm. The map covered all of England and the out lying isles. Dotted across the map were about two hundred red dots, all labeled with names. These dots represented the current locations of everyone with a Dark Mark branded onto their arms.

Harry smiled as several dots marked the location of Hogwarts. Harry and Ginny began committing the names to memory so as to know who to trust and who not to.

D. Malfoy

V. Crabbe

G. Goyle

S. Snape

T. Nott

Those names were all expected, however two names did surprise the couple slightly.

M. Edgecombe

D. Umbridge

The couple had briefly tossed around the idea that Umbridge was a Death Eater, but come to the conclusion that she was in fact just a horrible old woman. Having it confirmed that she was in fact a Death Eater, did change things. They would have to up the amount of pranks and tricks played on the woman.

Marietta Edgecombe was a girl in Ravenclaw a few years ahead of Harry and Ginny. Neither would have suspected that she was in fact a Death Eater. The fact that the Death Eater corruption had begun slipping out of Slytherin was deeply disturbing for the two. After scanning the map carefully for any large groupings the two were about to start training when a familiar name caught Harry's eye. T. Riddle, appeared to be pacing back and forth in what Harry guessed was Malfoy Manor.

Harry was tempted to flame to Malfoy Manor and end this entire thing right then, but something stopped him. A few seconds later he saw what a bad idea that would have been. Red dots all over the map began disappearing and then quickly reappearing in Malfoy Manor. After several minutes of watching a majority of the dots remain relatively still within the Manor, Harry and Ginny began their normal training exercises, while occasionally glancing at the map to see if anything had changed.

It was much later that night, after Harry and Ginny had once again fallen asleep curled up together on the couch that the map began to change. Sal was the first to notice the dispersal of the red dots, and then the group of about twenty or so that were reassembling on the outskirts of a small muggle town.

"Harry, Ginny!" The two sleeping teens, remained unconscious, though Ginny did attempt to burrow her head farther into Harry's shoulder. Sal sighed, and with a glance at Godric the two tried again. "HARRY! GINNY!" They yelled together.

Harry shot up knocking Ginny to the floor, she expected this though and rolled into a crouched position her wand pointed in front of her. Harry had spun as he stood up and was facing the couch prepared to hex anything that may have been trying to attack them from behind. It took a few seconds for them to realize they weren't under attack, and turn towards Sal and Godric, neither looked too happy at being awoken. Sal simply pointed at the map on the opposite wall.

One look was all it took for Harry and Ginny to summon their weapons, transform into their Phoenix forms, and disappear with a flash of fire.

Jennifer Hustick lay sound asleep in her bed. Her favorite pink unicorn was tucked safely under her arm and the large pink comforter, which had fairies racing across it, was covering almost all of her leaving just her head covered in dirty blond hair to rest on the matching pink pillow. Her parents had charmed her ceiling so that it would show the major constellations and occasionally a shooting star. The rest of her room was a light pink, that any four year old girl would love.

The serenity of the room was shattered, as Jennifer's mother rushed in, her wand tucked haphazardly into the waistband of her jeans. She rushed to her daughter and quickly shook her awake. The little girl sat up in her bed clearly frightened by the haphazard manner in which her mother had awoken her. It was only a few seconds later when the window in the room shook as something exploded down the block from their house.

Jennifer screamed, but her mother grabbed her shoulders. "Jenni listen to me." The small girl looked into her mothers eyes, and she registered the fear and a hint of sadness in them. "Jenni, you have to be a big girl for mommy, can you do that?" The little girl nodded fearfully.

"Good. I'm going to put a spell on you that makes you very hard to see. Then I'm going to help you out the window. There's bad men out front, I want you to run into the woods behind the house and hide. Don't let anyone see you."

"But what about you and Daddy?" The girls mother Danielle, smiled sadly.

"Daddy and I are going to try and stop the bad man from hurting people."

"But I want you and daddy to come with me! Pwease!" Jenni began crying, but just as she did a high pitched scream echoed through the neighborhood.

"I'm so sorry my darling little girl. Mommy and daddy need to help those people. You'll be safe, just stay hidden. We-We'll come find you in the morning." With those words Danielle cast a calming charm on her daughter and then a disillusionment charm.

"I love you so much." Were her last words as she lowered her daughter out the window and onto the soft grass.

Jenni took off into the darkness of the forest, looking for the little hideaway she had discovered while playing. Once there she ducked under the roots of a large tree and quietly waited, clutching her stuffed unicorn to her chest. The explosions, and screams from the village continued to echo through the forest. She'd only been in hiding for a few minutes when the sounds of destruction were joined by a new sound. Heaving thudding footsteps moving through the wood towards her. She pulled her legs up to her chest and made herself as small as she could.

Peeking through the roots of the tree, she saw the person approaching her step out into the light of the half moon. He was a large man, broad shouldered, and dressed in old robes. His hair was long and hung limply down over his shoulders. Personal hygiene was obviously not one of his strong points. He looked around the small clearing he was in and sniffed at the air.

"Mmm, I know you're there little girl. Why don't you come out and play with Uncle Fenrir?" The man smiled revealing yellowing rotted teeth. He sniffed the air again and turned towards where Jenni was hiding. "Come out come out wherever you are..."

The man was standing almost directly on top of her hiding spot now and Jenni was doing her best to keep as quiet as possible. Just as she thought the man had given up searching he looked down directly at her. "Hello poppet." He snarled and reached down.

Picking her up by the back of her neck he pulled the struggling girl out of her hiding spot.

She was still disillusioned, and so Fenrir missed as her small fist swung out smashing right into his nose. With a roar he dropped her and she scrambled away from him running as fast as she could into the woods. The heavy footsteps behind her crushing the undergrowth signaled that he was indeed giving chase. She could hear his footsteps and heavy breathing drawing closer and a glance over her shoulder confirmed that fact.

He was reaching out a hand to grab the back of her night shirt, when a yellowish spell shot through the air.

"Arg!"

Fenrir flew through the air colliding heavily with a tree. He fell to the ground in a heap and looked around in a daze. As Fenrir was knocked backwards an arm snaked around Jenni's waist and stopped her. Looking up she found kind brown eyes looking back at her. Taking her chances she ducked behind the woman's legs, praying she would protect her.

"Pick on someone your own size fur ball." A man's voice echoed through the woods as he stepped in front of Jenni, and the woman protecting her. He had messy black hair and brandished a sword that glinted in the moonlight.

"You don't know who you're messing with boy. Let me teach you a lesson in manners!" Fenrir roared as he dove across the clearing towards Jenni's savior. The man easily sidestepped the lunge and brought the hilt of his sword smashing down onto the back of Fenrir's head with a sickening crack. Fenrir smashed into the ground and slid to a stop. Despite the blow to the back of his head he still tried to shakily get to his feet.

The red light of a stunner ensured that he wouldn't be getting up for a while.

A few minutes later and Fenrir was chained up and hanging upside down from the sturdiest branch Harry could find. Ginny was gently trying to calm down the sobbing four year old girl they'd found.

Ginny had cancelled the disillusionment charm on her and was trying to question her on why she'd been in the woods.

"M-M-Mommy told me to c-come out here and h-h-hide! P-Pwease you h-have to go h-help my m-mommy and d-daddy!" Ginny pulled the small girl into a hug as she sobbed into her shoulder.

"Shh, it's alright we'll go help you're mommy and daddy. We just need to help you first." Carefully Ginny extracted the stuffed unicorn from the girls arms and tapped it with her wand muttering 'Portus'. The unicorn glowed blue for a second than appeared normal once again.

"Jenni, I need you to hold on very tightly to your unicorn. It's going to take you somewhere safe. When you get there ask for Professor Potter or Black. They're very nice and will take care of you until we can bring your mommy to you." The little girl sniffled but nodded silently, tightening her grip on her unicorn. Ginny smiled kindly at the girl and stepped back quietly saying 'Activate' as she did.

It was nearly two a.m. but as usual Albus Dumbledore was not sleeping. Instead he sat in office analyzing the recent Death Eater attacks, searching for a pattern. Also on his mind were the many mysteries surrounding young Harry Potter and his bondmate Ginevra Weasley, or Potter, as the law stated. Either way Dumbledore wasn't quite prepared when the alarms in his office began going off signaling someone port keying into the castle without his permission.

Acting quickly Dumbledore raced out of his office, quickly shooting off a patronus to all the other professor's warning them that the castle may be under attack. The sensor had said the portkey landed in the Entrance Hall, so it only took Dumbledore a few seconds to reach the main staircase. Peeking cautiously around the edge of stairs, he at first saw nothing in the hall. He did however hear a quiet sob, and recognized it as the voice of a small child.

Carefully Dumbledore began to descend the stairway searching for the source of the noise. It didn't take him long to spot the small girl curled into a ball near the center of the Entrance Hall. Carefully scanning the hall for more threats Dumbledore approached the girl, baffled at how she had arrived there. It was a few seconds later that Severus Snape, Lily and James Potter, Sirius and Elizabeth Black,



and Minerva McGonagall arrived in the hall wands drawn and ready for a fight.

"Albus what's going on?" McGonagall asked as she took in the odd sight before her.

"I'm not quite sure Minerva. The alarms in my office alerted me to an incoming unauthorized portkey, but when I arrived I found only this little girl. I haven't had the chance to question her yet." Dumbledore responded turning back towards the small child.

Lily and Elizabeth had already put away their wands and knelt down next to the child. "Hello, I'm Lily and this is my friend Elizabeth. What's your name?" Lily asked calmly, gently rubbing the crying girl's back.

The girl sniffled and looked up at the two women talking to her. "My name's Jenni. The lady who sent me here said I had to ask for Professor Potter and Black."

Lily smiled down kindly at her and pointed to herself and Elizabeth. "Well that just happens to be the two of us. Now can you tell us why this lady sent you here?"

Once again the small girl began to cry, but managed to shakily answer the question. "The b-bad m-man was ch-chasing me. Then the nice m-man and l-lady s-saved me. They're g-going to h-help my m-mommy and d-daddy."

"What's wrong with your mommy and daddy?" Elizabeth asked, speaking for the first time.

"Th-They're f-fighting the bad m-men attacking o-our v-village." Jenni started sobbing once again, and Lily pulled her into her lap doing her best to comfort the small girl.

Elizabeth turned back to the others and looked grimly at them. "Her town was attacked by Death Eaters. It appears someone saved her and has gone to help her parents defend the village."

"We need to send help!" Sirius shouted stepping forward quickly.

"Send it where Padfoot? We don't know where they're attacking." James said looking worriedly at his wife who was comforting the small girl in her lap.

"We need to do something!" Sirius shouted desperately.

"All we can do at the moment is hope whoever these two saviors are they send more survivors along, and maybe notice as to where this attack is happening." Dumbledore pronounced sadly.

The crazed cackling was the first thing Harry and Ginny heard above the screams of innocent people being tortured. A few seconds later they emerged from the tree cover, and got their first view of the destruction that had befallen the village. Every building in sight was lit ablaze, and people were running in terror from a crowd of black cloaked devils.

At the front of the Death Eaters, Bellatrix Lestrange strode proudly, her mask thrown carelessly aside. She led the group of nearly thirty Death Eaters, absently tossing curses and hexes at the backs of the fleeing muggles. There were already dozens of maimed bodies spread across the street and in the yards of the burning houses.

Harry and Ginny took the scene in quickly and spotted the only thing that was keeping the Death Eaters from wreaking more havoc than they already had. A man and woman were taking cover behind a fallen tree shooting spells into the ranks of the Death Eaters. Six Death Eaters were keeping them trapped behind the tree, while three more were slowly making their way around to get a clear shot.

Just as the sickly green of the killing curse began to hurdle at the woman's back, she was pulled magically backwards out of its path. The man quickly followed, a shield springing up to protect him from stray curses. The two stopped at Harry and Ginny's feet. Without a word Harry dropped a piece of rope on them and they disappeared in a whirl of color.

The Death Eaters looked on in confusion and a hint of admiration, as the slightly glowing couple walked out onto the field of battle. Fire reflected off the metal of their swords, giving the illusion that the swords hanging from their waists were in fact on fire. The fact that the two emitted a softly glowing golden aura did nothing to diminish the sheer power and grandeur radiating from them. An ordinary

person would think Heaven itself had sent it's most powerful warriors to battle the demons destroying the village.

One brave Death Eater stepped forward silently throwing a spell at the golden couple. The spell simply disappeared a few feet from them, and Harry flicked his wand towards the man. The only evidence of anything approaching the lone Death Eater was the grass in front of him being crushed to the ground as if by some powerful wind. A second later the Death Eater was thrown through the air smashing through the wall of a burning house.

He never exited the building.

The remaining Death Eaters looked in horror from Harry and Ginny to the burning hole where their comrade had just disappeared. Two spun on the spot as if trying to disapparate, unfortunately Harry and Ginny had erected anti-apparition wards around the entire village. No one would be escaping their fury tonight.

With a grim smile locked onto their faces they jogged fearlessly towards the heart of the Death Eater forces, a sword in one hand, a wand in the other. The Death Eaters stood courageously against the approaching duo, confident in their numbers. That's about the time both Harry and Ginny each disappeared in a cloud of fire. The Death Eaters stared dumbfounded at the spot the two had been. Therefore they never noticed when the two reappeared directly behind them, at least until two of their number flew forwards, knocking several more over.

Bellatrix Lestrange had watched all of this with an insane smile. She'd been growing bored torturing helpless muggles. Perhaps finally she'd have a real challenge. For the moment though she stood farther back in the group of Death Eaters watching as those under her command were cut down one by one.

Harry and Ginny moved in perfect tandem. With one motion they would block an incoming attack with their swords, while using the follow through to fire a blasting or cutting spell into the crowd of Death Eaters. A flash of metal was usually the last thing any Death Eater who got too close saw.

As a well placed cutting curse from Ginny ended the life of another Death Eater, one of them finally lost his cool and screamed in horror.

That was all it took to break the spirit of the Death Eaters and the fifteen survivors turned tail and ran off in different directions. Ginny took off slowly after them, using the environment and well placed spells to incapacitate the remaining Death Eaters. Harry however, turned to the lone Death Eater still holding their ground.

Bellatrix Lestrange flashed a feral smile at the handsome young man before her. "My, My, isn't the wittle boy so powerful. Why don't you swear allegiance to my Lord. Then I won't have to kill you."

"You won't be killing anyone Bellatrix. I promise that by the time we're done, you're gonna need a body bag to hold what's left of you." Harry said, a look of grim determination on his face.

"You can try boy, but I guarantee you're little girlfriend is going to watch you die before I kill her." Bellatrix spat out, then without warning flung her wand forward. "Avada Kedavra!" The green spell flew at Harry who casually batted it away with his sword.

"You'll have to do better than that Bellatrix." Harry slashed his wand twice towards Bellatrix sending two blood red cutting curses towards her. Effortlessly she raised a shield blocking the two spells.

"You'll have to do a little better than that too."

With that the battle began in earnest. The two opponents seemed evenly matched as Harry and Bellatrix danced around one another. Harry would use his sword to block any unforgivables Bellatrix used, while Bellatrix seemed able to keep all of Harry's spells at bay with a shield. The battle continued in a stalemate for several minutes before Harry finally threw a blasting hex at Bellatrix's feet.

The ground in front of her exploded sending her flying through the air. Harry was unprepared however when she hit the ground, rolled to a crouch, and threw a silent disarming spell at him. The spell hit him, knocking him backwards as his wand and sword were both pulled from his hand. Harry landed on the ground hard and had the breathe knocked out of him. He lay dazed for a moment looking up into the clouds of smoke. A second later his view was blocked by Bellatrix's head.

"I hope you enjoy death, just know your girlfriends will be much longer and much more painful." Bellatrix began cackling and stood up her wand pointed at Harry's forehead.

In her moment of distraction Harry raised his hand and wandlessly cast a blasting hex right at her chest. Due to his dazed state, and the fact that it was wandless and silent, it didn't have the affect it normally would. Instead of blasting a hole in Bellatrix's chest, it instead crushed her rib cage, collapsed a lung and sent her flying through the air.

Bellatrix gasped for breathe as she struggled to stand. It burned to breathe and she could already see the way her chest was broken apart by the curse. Desperately she reached for the emergency portkey tucked into her robes. Concentrating on the word Activate, Bellatrix disappeared with a small pop.

Danielle Hustick collapsed in a heap on top of her husband David. She barely had time to glance at her surroundings before three people descended upon her. One she quickly recognized as Albus Dumbledore, while the other two looked vaguely familiar. She saw their mouths moving but couldn't concentrate on what they were saying as the events leading to this point replayed in her head.

One moment she and her husband had been fighting Death Eaters, trying desperately to give the muggles of her town time to escape. The next moment two people had appeared and saved them from certain death. She wondered briefly what had happened to her saviors, before the fact that her daughter was still missing slammed into her mind, vanishing all other thoughts.

"Jenni! My daughter Jenni! I need to go back and find her! She's still out there. Please, let me go!" Danielle desperately tried to pry her arms from the black haired man holding her.

"Listen Lady, your daughter is fine! She showed up here a little while ago, my wife Lily just took her to the Hospital wing. Which is where I'm taking you, Madam Pomfrey will want to check you over." Danielle almost immediately relaxed and allowed the man to guide her towards the infirmary.

As soon as she entered into the Hospital Wing there was a joyful shout and a small blond haired blur crashed into Danielle's legs

nearly toppling the woman over. Sobbing in unparalleled relief and happiness Danielle dropped to her knees pulling her daughter into her arms. Her daughter's small arms clamped around her mothers neck and she refused to let go, until finally Danielle hoisted her up and carried her to a bed. Behind her, David retold their story to James, Dumbledore, and Sirius. Lily and Elizabeth sat a few beds away.

Few noticed the look of anxious fear on Lily's face as she carefully watched the doors to the Hospital wing, waiting for more arrivals from the battle.

Harry gingerly rubbed the back of his head as he looked at the spot where Bellatrix had disappeared from. Pulling his hand back he looked absently at the few drops of blood smeared on his fingertips. The rock he'd hit his head on must have broken the skin. The wound seemed superficial, but he would have Ginny look at it anyway.

Feeling her presence approach behind him, he turned towards her. Behind her nearly a dozen unconscious and bound Death Eaters floated lazily. Ginny raced the last few feet to Harry and threw her arms around his neck.

"I thought I'd have to come rescue you from Bellatrix. We'll have to be more careful next time we face her." She pulled her arms back and carefully touched the spot where Harry was bleeding. "Hold still." Ginny closed her eyes for a moment and a golden glow grew out of her hand illuminating the back of Harry's head. The wound closed up and the blood vanished before the glow disappeared. "There much better."

"Well, it's nice see you had your fun, while I had to deal with the psycho bitch." Harry said jokingly, observing the unconscious Death Eaters floating along behind her. "Did you manage to catch anyone good?"

Ginny shook her head disappointedly. "No, it looks like Bellatrix was the only senior member here. These ones are mostly fresh out of Hogwarts. I haven't checked the ones we killed yet." Harry put a hand on her arm as she moved towards the lawn strewn with the bodies of fallen Death Eaters.

"Don't, we need to go. The Ministry will be here soon. I'm sure the Prophet will report anyone important tomorrow." Ginny nodded, and let the Death Eaters floating behind her drop unceremoniously to the ground. "Let's head home love."

With that Harry and Ginny disappeared in a flash of fire, neither registering the fact that they hadn't needed to transform. Five minutes later a dozen aurors appeared in the middle of the street.

The current lair of the Dark Lord Voldemort was a place few would expect. He glumly looked around the interior of the abandoned haunted house. It had once been part of an amusement park, but the park had closed five or so years ago, and no one had bought the land. Therefore the rides and attractions had remained standing, slowly falling into decay.

Voldemort wished he could stay at Malfoy manor where all of the meetings were held, but it was simply too dangerous with the Ministry sniffing around. Therefore he had been relegated to this abandoned Haunted House. It had been discovered by Wormtail while he ran from the Ministry and had been declared one of the safest places for Voldemort to hide.

After all who would expect the Darkest Wizard of all time to hide in an abandoned amusement park.

The only people who knew of his location were his most Senior Death Eaters, therefore it was a slight surprise when the wards sounded. A moment later a black heap appeared in the main entrance hall. The heap coughed and gasped, a splotch of red suddenly appearing on the carpet near its face.

Voldemort waited silently for the new arrival to regain their composure. This took several moments, and finally the heap revealed itself to be Bellatrix Lestrange. She shakily rose to her feet and coughed, her breathing slowly becoming labored.

He could tell she'd been gravely injured. Growing impatient quickly Voldemort met her eyes and easily delved into her mind. It took almost a minute to view all of the memories pertaining to that night. When he finally pulled out of her mind, he was beyond furious.

"Thirty of my newest recruits are dead or captured because of your incompetence Bellatrix. Be glad you are one of my more favored followers." Voldemort as he glared icily at the broken woman before him.

"Y-Yes M-Mi-Milord." Bellatrix got out in a raspy halting voice.

"I'll postpone my punishment until you are healed, but know that it will be severe." Bellatrix could only nod this time. "Good, get yourself to Malfoy Manor, have Narcissa look over your wounds."

Bellatrix bowed deeply and spun quickly apparating away. Voldemort sat back in his makeshift throne, his red eyes glowing dimly in the dark chamber.

A/N

Yes I'm back! Those of you sending those threatening letters and bags of flaming dog poop to my house can stop now. I can't guarantee how often my updates will be this semester, but know that i'm back and i've worked through my writers block.

This would have been up earlier but my laptop broke and i needed to send it in for three weeks worth of repairs. Anyway i hope you all enjoy it, and by my count i have 3 maybe four movie references and 1 very obscure music quote (i'll give you a hint, it's around when Harry and Bellatrix fight)

Well that's all i have to say for now, Next Chapter: Useless filler from christmas to DoM, There will be blood!

P.S. in case i don't update before Halloween, which i plan to do, look out for my Halloween special, Dawn of the Inferi!



## Chapter 23: A long, strange trip

Harry and Ginny reappeared in the Founders Room, and nearly collapsed backwards onto the couch. The fight had left them exhausted. The close scare with Bellatrix had also shaken them to the core. It was only due to her own arrogance that Bellatrix had not killed Harry. Next time they would have to be careful, lest they be killed by their own hubris. Harry's eyes began fluttering closed and he was almost asleep when Rowena cleared her throat loudly immediately gaining the attention of the two teens.

"Harry your mother is waiting in the infirmary. She's appears very anxious to make sure that you and Ginny returned alright." Harry and Ginny looked guiltily at one another before rising slowly from the couch.

"Your mum doesn't miss a thing does she love?" Ginny asked smirking slightly.

"No I guess she doesn't. Rowena can you get her to come outside, I'd rather not have to explain ourselves to everyone." Harry asked as he held the entrance into the Founder's room open for Ginny.

"No problem dear, I'll have her meet you outside of the infirmary."

"Thanks!" Harry called back as the door closed behind him.

"Never in all my life have I heard such a stupid, half-baked scheme! What on earth were either of you thinking! You could've been killed!" Lily had been going on like this for almost fifteen minutes now. After exiting the Hospital Wing and thoroughly checking Harry and Ginny for any injuries, she'd remained quiet only long enough to listen to their version of the nights events.

"Mum, we're fine we promise, and we saved a lot of people tonight." Harry tried desperately to placate his mother. They were currently in an unused classroom, that Ginny had covered in privacy charms.

"I know you are but it's still my duty as your mother to tell you how stupid your actions tonight were." Lily said with a final exasperated sigh.

"We know mum, and we're sorry. But we couldn't stand by anymore and let Voldemort kill all these people. Maybe now he'll slow his attacks." Harry pleaded desperately for his mother to see things his way and forgive him. It appeared that his pleas had paid off when a moment later her features softened and a small amount of pride entered her eyes.

"Perhaps, but from now on I want to know before you two decide to leave the school. Do I make myself clear?" Lily looked pointedly at both Harry and Ginny who nodded as one and looked at her for a queue that she was done. "I'm sure both of you are tired and would like to get to bed, so you may go." Harry and Ginny were out the door almost as soon as Lily was finished speaking.

"Those two are going to turn me grey." Lily muttered under her breath as the door shut behind them.

It appeared over the next few weeks that Harry's prediction of slowing down Voldemort's attacks had come true. After the Death Eater's miserable defeat at the hands of Harry and Ginny, the attacks had all but ceased. When no one stepped forward to claim responsibility for the victory over the Death Eaters, the Ministry had almost immediately grabbed the spot light claiming two of their most loyal Aurors had been in the area and stopped the attack. The Ministry still held firm to the belief that Voldemort had not returned and instead claimed that these attacks were planned by a group of former Death Eaters, using the rumors that Dumbledore and Daniel had started to gather followers.

By the end of January the only attack that had happened since the attack Harry and Ginny had stopped, was when three Death Eaters had assassinated one of the aurors the ministry had claimed was a Hero. Harry and Ginny watched the map carefully. Besides meetings every two or three days the Death Eaters didn't congregate in groups of more than five. Harry and Ginny knew that they were planning something big in retaliation but could not figure out what Voldemort was planning.

As students returned from their holiday break the map became shrouded by red dots. Marietta Edgecombe wasn't the only non-Slytherin who was a Death Eater. Nearly a dozen and a half sixth and seventh years from Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw, and Slytherin came back sporting Dark Marks. Harry and Ginny made sure to let all of

them know they were being watched. Two weeks after classes started they used their extensive pranking background to turn everyone bearing a Dark Mark into a large pink Snake.

After the prank had worn off the victims had looked at one another nervously and then glanced suspiciously at all of their laughing classmates. No one seemed to notice that the victims hadn't been random, although James, Sirius, Lily, and Elizabeth had their suspicions as to who had pulled the prank and why.

So it was the for the first time since the beginning of the school year, a relative peace fell over the students, faculty, and the wizarding world in general.

By the time March began to fade into April, Voldemort still had yet to retaliate for his horrible loses at the hands of Harry and Ginny. The Ministry began claiming that since the small victory, the Death Eaters responsible had been scared into submission and would be rounded up soon enough. Most people eager to believe that the killings had stopped accepted this with little question. Others did everything they could to prepare themselves for the killings to come back with a vengeance.

Harry and Ginny continued their training, if Bellatrix could almost beat Harry in single combat, there was no way either of them would be able to kill Voldemort when the time came. They threw themselves into their training with a ferocity neither knew they had. To see Harry and Ginny outside of classes and meals became a rare and unexpected sight.

It was around this time that they noticed increased Death Eater meetings on their maps. The meetings, it seemed, wouldn't lead to any raids but the frequency of Death Eaters gathering at Malfoy Manor had significantly increased. Harry began to almost wish they'd just attack already and stop with the suspense.

"So... you think we should start studying for exams?" Ron had draped himself across a couch in the Gryffindor common room. A pile of homework sat on the table before him hiding Daniel from view.

"Well, when did you and... Hermione start studying last year?" Daniel asked craning his neck around the pile of books to see Ron's reaction.

"Umm... February? But Hermione was always insane about her study habits. I doubt the OWLS are going to be thaaaaat hard." Ron scoffed. "Lets go play some Quidditch, the weather is finally improving for the first time in weeks."

"Alright sounds like a plan then." Daniel said pushing all his books into the bottomless bag his Father had gotten him for Christmas. "I'll go grab my bag and meet you down by the Pitch."

Albus Dumbledore sat in his office studying several documents closely. Voldemort had been quiet in recent weeks, and although he couldn't be sure, he believed that Harry and Ginny were to thank for that. It had been four months since the Christmas attacks and not even a peep had come from Voldemort or his forces. Of course Cornelius had taken full credit for putting down the "rogue death eater cell".

Snape had also become rather useless as of late. Voldemort apparently suspected him, and therefore had limited his knowledge of upcoming plans. Although Severus did say he suspected a large attack was coming. Therefore it was no real surprise when a knock at the door preceded a very out of breath Snape rushing into the room.

"He's moving on it tonight." Was all Severus need to say.

Without another word Dumbledore conjured a phoenix patronus that left the room disappearing deeper into the castle. "Come Severus we will meet the others at Headquarters." A few moments later Dumbledore's office was left empty as the two disappeared into the emerald green fire of the Floo.

Harry and Ginny were in the middle of a meditation session when Rowena's voice interrupted them. "Children, our friends seem to be gathering once again."

Neither Harry nor Ginny bothered opening their eyes though Ginny did ask, "Full meeting or just the inner circle?"

"It would seem the inner circle, though there are several lower ranking individuals there." The portrait answered.

"It's almost nightfall. Most likely they're just initiating a few new recruits. I doubt anything will come of it." Harry muttered, then everything was quiet once again as they sunk into a relative trance once again.

At least until Helga interrupted them. "Harry, Ginny I think you should look at this."

Sighing in frustration at losing their peace and quiet Harry and Ginny stood and moved to stand in front of the map. "What are we looking at?" Ginny asked her eyes scanning the map.

"Zoom in on Hogwarts." A new feature they had added to the map was the ability to zoom in on a specific area, thus they were able to enlarge Hogwarts to see where each dot was specifically.

Immediately Harry and Ginny saw what had Helga so concerned. All of the student Death Eaters within Hogwarts had gathered together in Umbridge's classroom. The entire time they had been watching the Death Eaters, neither had seen the ones based in Hogwarts gather together so blatantly. Something was going on and Harry and Ginny had a suspicion it involved Hogwarts.

Zooming back out Harry and Ginny realized that the Death Eaters at Malfoy Manor had dispersed. The only difference was that this time Voldemort had gone with them. Scanning the map Harry spotted a large group of senior Death Eaters apparate to what they'd guessed based on it's location was the Ministry of Magic. Another group led by Bellatrix had apparated to the edge of the Forbidden Forest.

"This is it, isn't it?" Ginny asked quietly.

"No I don't think so... Voldemort's attacking the ministry at night. That place is deserted by now, only a light security staff and some obliviators. His style would be to attack in the middle of the day and achieve maximum casualties. Also he wouldn't let Bellatrix led an attack on Hogwarts. His pride wouldn't let him. He'd want to kill Dumbledore himself." Harry shook his head and began pacing in front of the map.

"This is something else. I'm not sure what." Harry paused and looked at the map again. In Hogwarts, Malfoy had separated from all the others and appeared to be returning to the Slytherin Dormitories.

"I need to talk to my mum. She might be able to reveal something to us."

Ginny nodded in understanding beside him and they turned to go. "Wait!" This came from Godric who was staring intently at the Ministry of Magic. "Look, the Death Eaters are taking up a formation of some kind."

Harry and Ginny returned to the map, and indeed the Death Eaters were taking spots in groups of two spread throughout the ministry. "It looks like they're waiting for something." Harry mumbled under his breathe.

A gasp next to him drew his attention. "Harry it's an ambush! Some ones about to walk right into a trap." Harry looked at the map and realized that indeed the Death Eaters had formed a circle around a central area. Whoever walked into the trap would be taking fire from all sides.

"We need to find my mother." Harry said and together they raced towards the portrait leading out.

"Mum!" Harry rushed into his mothers office, but found it empty. Sighing he turned racing towards his mother's living quarters. Halfway there Harry literally ran into McGonagall as she came around a corner knocking her to the ground. "I'm so sorry Professor!"

"Mr. Potter! Ms. Weasley! What are you two doing out after curfew?" McGonagall took the hand Harry offered her and was soon once again on two feet. She leveled her best glare at the two teens.

"I need to see my mother immediately! It's an emergency." Harry said impatiently, ready to push past the elderly Professor.

"Well I'm sorry Mr. Potter but it will have to wait. She was called off on urgent business. Unless it's some sort of family problem I should be able to help you." She said sternly, she seemed a bit surprised as Harry paled significantly.

"Well then I have to see Sirius and Elizabeth!" He said this time starting to walk past her.

"They are also gone! The only teachers currently in the school are myself, Professor Umbridge, Madam Pomfrey, and Hagrid. Now what is the problem Mr. Potter?" McGonagall asked in exasperation.

Harry and Ginny looked at each in terror as everything fell into place. "You're the only ones left... The others are on their way to the ministry aren't they?" McGonagall's surprised expression was the only answer they needed.

"Harry, he's a tactical genius. He's been planning this all along for the last few months." Ginny said, a small amount of terror evident in her voice.

"What are you talking about? How do you know where the others have gone?" McGonagall was obviously flustered now and looked from one teen to the other waiting for an answer.

The two ignored her though. "He leads the Order into a trap at the ministry while the Death Eaters here let his forces in... He'll eliminate his biggest threats and have a new fortress to stage his attacks from, all in one night..." Harry said as he started pacing.

"Harry, I'll stay here. I can handle a few students and low level Death Eaters. You go help your parents. They'll be getting there any minute now." Ginny said squeezing his hand as he nodded. A moment later she stepped back as he disappeared in a flash of fire.

"Professor McGonagall, get Hagrid. Bellatrix is on her way here with Death Eaters. Umbridge is going to let her in." Ginny said turning towards her dormitory.

McGonagall called after her. "Where are you going Ms. Weasley?"

Without turning Ginny yelled back. "To get help!" Then with that she disappeared around a corner.

Several minutes later Ginny stepped out of the Ravenclaw common room. A bag hung from her shoulder and behind her Luna walked blissfully along carrying a bag of her own. "Come on we need to make one more stop."

They hurried along through the hallways until they reached the seventh floor. Finally they stopped in front of the portrait of a fat

woman. She looked down at them her eyes challenging.  
"Password?"

"I'm Ginevra Potter, Heir to Hogwarts. Let me in." Ginny said her face serious, and her tone commanding.

"At once Milady." The portrait said as it swung open. The Fat Lady herself bowing respectfully. Ginny smirked at the formal behavior of the portrait.

Once in the Gryffindor common room Ginny left Luna to admire the assorted decorations while she crept quietly up the steps. Her first stop was the fifth year Gryffindor boys dorm. Once inside she quietly woke Neville up and told him to head for the common room. Once he was on his way down the stairs she continued upwards.

Finally she reached the seventh year dorm. Inside she was not surprised to find her twin brothers wide awake and gathered around a bubbling potion. Hearing the door they looked up and seemed only mildly surprised that she was there.

"Hello dearest-"

"And most favored sister."

"How did you-"

"Come to be in our humble sleeping quarters?"

Ginny rolled her eyes and decided not to mention she was their only sister. "I need your help come on." This was enough to surprise the twins as she rarely ever asked for their assistance.

Intrigued the two followed her down the stairs to the common room where Neville and Luna were sitting patiently on a couch near the dying fire. The two sat down on a couch opposite the other couple while Ginny set her bag down in an overstuffed arm chair. She began pulling equipment out of the bottomless bag.

"Death Eaters are on their way to the castle. The teachers are gone, Voldemort's luring them into a trap." She said as she pulled her hair back into a tight ponytail. "Harry's gone after them." She strapped her two short swords onto her back. "I need you four to start moving



all the students into a safe area." A wave of her hand transfigured her school robes to a skintight black body suit. "There's a room down the hall from here called the Room of Requirement." Fred and George both looked up at this. "Good you know it. Get everyone you can there, at least from Gryffindor, Ravenclaw, and Hufflepuff. Slytherin is too dangerous right now."

The other four nodded and Ginny smiled once again to her brothers. "I'll see you once the fighting is done."

A bright flash of flames and she was gone. The others sprang into action immediately. Luna moved to return to Ravenclaw, while Neville headed for the steps. The twins followed Luna out and headed towards a secret passage that would lead them towards the Hufflepuff common room.

"Oi! Ron wake up!" Daniel poked a loudly snoring Ron in the back of the head once again.

"Huh? Wha-" He was cut off as Daniel shushed him.

"We fell asleep. It's way past curfew now. We're gonna have to sneak back up to the common room. I forgot my cloak." Daniel said standing up from the bench he had fallen asleep on.

"Oh crap. Snape's gonna catch us for sure mate." Ron said groaning loudly at the prospect of detention.

"I know but what are we going to do?" Daniel said reaching down to pick up his broom. Beside him Ron looked down at his own broom and began smiling widely.

"We could always just fly back to our rooms mate." Ron said his smile stretching across his entire face.

Daniel stood up also smiling and nodded excitedly to Ron. The two hopped on their brooms and took off over the grounds towards the tower that housed their dorms.

A/N

Happy 1 year anniversary to me! Besides that... i know it's not a long update but i didn't want to get into the battle yet. Sorry about the

long wait, my laptop decided to wait until a week after my warranty expired to begin breaking down at every turn. So i kept having to save up the money to fix it. i still have to press the 'c' button really hard to get it to type.

The next few chapters are gonna be roughly around this size maybe a little longer. Also i'm gonna wrap this story up soon. Maybe the next five chapters and an epilogue to bring me to 30 total chapters. Read and review!

## Chapter 24: The Battle Part 1

Harry had never seen most of the Ministry of Magic, mostly just the Atrium and the area on the way to his mothers old offices. Therefore he wasn't sure where he should flame to, nor where to begin searching for his mother. So he instead concentrated on an image of his mother and focused on flaming to her location. This trick in fact worked and Harry found himself reappearing in the middle of large circular room. Spell flashes lit most of the room while shouts of battle filled the air.

At first Harry thought he'd only succeeded in finding the battle and not his mother. That was until he realized she was in fact laying at his feet. "Mum!" He cried dropping to his knees beside her and pulling her head up onto his lap.

Carefully checking for a pulse he was relieved to find one and hoped that she had simply been rendered unconscious in the fighting. Taking a moment to look around he realized others had not been as lucky. Not ten feet away Moody lay in a puddle of his own blood his throat having been viciously ripped open. The sickly green of a killing curse flashed over his head and crashed into a wall melting it slightly. Turning he found that the battle was continuing all around him.

He quickly spotted Sirius and Elizabeth fighting back to back trying to hold off four Death Eaters. Dumbledore stood at the center of the room near a large veiled archway, he battled ten Death Eaters simultaneously, though only barely keeping them at bay. James, Arthur and Molly Weasley had been backed up into a corner now desperately trying to hold off five Death Eaters. Remus, Tonks, and an auror Harry thought was named Kingsley were fighting on the bleacher style steps trying to fend off four Death Eaters firing down on them from the top of the bleachers.

On the opposite side of the room Harry could only watch as a member of the Order he didn't know was struck by the killing curse and fell to the ground. The two Death Eaters that had been kept at bay by the unnamed Order member rushed past the body heading towards Remus and Tonks unprotected backs. Harry took a final glance around the room wondering where Voldemort could be hiding. Not seeing him Harry looked down once again at his unconscious mother.

It looked like she wasn't going to be waking anytime soon, and he didn't want to leave her here unprotected. Making a split second decision he grabbed her shoulders and flamed to Potter Manor. Leaving her in the care of the house elves he flamed back to the site of the battle. Upon arriving he realized the grim consequences that making sure his mother was safe had caused. Remus was bleeding profusely, his right leg missing from the knee down. Kingsley was face down in between two of the bleacher benches. Tonks was desperately trying to fight enemies both in front and behind her.

Not wasting another moment Harry flamed across the room appearing directly behind Tonks and blasting the two surprised Death Eaters behind her across the room to land in unnatural positions among the opposite bleachers. Reaching behind him he grabbed Tonks arm swinging her around to cover his back while sending five exploding hexes in rapid succession at the four Death Eaters above him. Only one of the hexes hit home and Harry watched in grim satisfaction as one of the Death Eaters chests exploded in a shower of gore.

The three remaining Death Eaters looked at the remains of their comrade in horror and Harry used that to his advantage. Flaming from his position below them he appeared mid sword swing in front of one cutting deep into his stomach and allowing a showing of intestines and organs to fall out. Another flame and Harry had plunged his sword through the heart of another combatant. That was all it took for the final Death Eater to turn and begin running away as fast as he could. Harry fired a stunner at the retreating mans back and watched as he fell to the ground unconscious.

Seeing that Tonks was tending to Remus, Harry flamed down behind the Death Eaters viciously attacking his father and the Weasley's. James was obviously carrying the group taking on three Death Eaters at once while Arthur and Molly both fought one each. Harry took two of the Death Eaters unawares stunning one in the back and launching another one across the room into a wall with a blasting curse. That freed up Molly and alerted the others to his presence.

Realizing that they were now outnumbered the three remaining Death Eaters tried to back up away from their opponents. Harry was just moving into finish them off when a scream ripped through the air

followed shortly by a heartrending roar of rage. Harry glanced past the three Death Eaters facing him and saw Elizabeth unmoving on the floor while Sirius threw himself at the nearest Death Eater. Glancing back at his father who nodded subtly Harry disappeared in a pillar of flames reappearing in front of the two Death Eaters who had been about to hex the distracted Sirius.

They stared at him in surprise and Harry used the moment of distraction to send a powerful cutting curse through the mask of one Death Eater and watching in grim satisfaction as blood began to pour from the mans cut up face. The second Death Eater recovered and threw a killing curse at Harry's chest. Harry sidestepped it and returned several cutting curses and exploding hexes of his own. The Death Eater put up a shield absorbing the first few but an exploding hex made it through though greatly weakened and knocked the Death Eater backwards a few feet. Then another cutting curse hit the man arm leaving a deep gash up the mans wand arm from wrist to elbow.

Harry realized that the man only had a few seconds to live before he bled out but the Death Eater didn't seem to realize this. He raised his wand in his weak hand. "Avada Ked-" Then he stumbled forward grasping his bleeding arm. He collapsed to his knees looking in horror at his arm now drenching the rest of his body in blood before falling forward onto his face a puddle of blood forming around his arm and spreading outwards.

Harry turned to find Sirius pounding a bloody fist over and over again into a clearly dead Death Eater's face. The mans face had been reduced to mush yet Sirius continued to pound the mans face with every ounce of rage in him. Harry moved towards Elizabeth, only taking a side long glance as Dumbledore stunned his final opponent, and knelt down beside her prone form.

Carefully he checked for a pulse, upon finding one he performed an inspection charm trying to determine what spell she had been hit with. Two different colored glows appeared around her, and Harry sighed in relief. 'Enervate' was all it took to have his beloved godmother opening her eyes once again.

"Harry what are you doing here?" She asked trying to sit up and wincing in pain.

"Careful, you were hit with a crucio and then someone stunned you." Harry said helping her up into a sitting position. "Sirius! Elizabeth is awake!" Harry called over Elizabeth's shoulder.

Sirius froze mid punch and turned to see his wife looking questioningly from his bloody hand to the now faceless Death Eater. "Lizzy you're alright!" Sirius turned and covered the distance between them in the blink of an eye pulling her into a bone crushing hug.

Turning away from his godparents Harry moved towards the remaining members of the Order of the Phoenix as they gathered around the bodies of their fallen. James seeing his son, moved towards him. "Harry where's your mother?"

"She's fine I took her to Potter Manor and told the elves to take care of her." Harry said and James sighed in relief at the fact that his wife was safe. Smiling he carefully placed his hand on Harry's shoulder. "You uh, you were really great Harry... I'm uh, proud of you." James said smiling slightly as he tried to pay his son a compliment for the first time in his life.

"Er, thanks...dad" Harry responded awkwardly before walking past his father to the rest of the group. Moody's body and the other unknown member of the Order were laid next to each other, while Tonks and Molly cared for an injured Remus and Kingsley.

"Mr. Weasley, where are the other Order members?" Harry knew he had only beaten off a small grouping of Death Eaters, and that there were much more spread throughout the building, most of them Inner Council members, and then there was Voldemort himself.

"We were separated." A grim look passed over his face as he looked towards the door leading out of the room. "they were waiting for us, and we walked right into their trap. I'm pretty sure Dung and Emmeline Vance were killed in that first volley. Bill, Aberforth, Flitwick, and a few aurors I don't know that well were forced into another door way. Hopefully they'll be alright until we can reach them."

Harry frowned, something about this wasn't adding up. "Why would they send the newer inexperienced Death Eaters against all of you. The only reason they were winning was because they had the

superior numbers... Why send the inner circle after the less experienced group....?" Harry questioned out loud not expecting an answer.

"Because, Harry... They were simply a distraction to wear out the more experienced fighters while we cut your forces in half." Harry turned upon hearing the cruel high pitched voice of evil. Standing at the top of the bleacher seats surrounded by another twenty Death Eaters stood Lord Voldemort. Suspended in the air in front of him were the bodies of the missing Order members.

Dolores Umbridge sat in her classroom several hours after curfew. Around her were almost two dozen students all fidgeting nervously. They'd gathered because tonight was the night when they and their fellow Death Eaters would over run Hogwarts, the most defensible fortress of the light. Even now a group of twenty-five fellow Death Eaters led by Bellatrix Lestrange approached the defenseless school. Umbridge was convinced that no one would stand in their way. Her master had assured her of the genius of his trap.

"Remember once the mark appears, all of you are to go to the Common Rooms and kill any students intelligent enough to put up a resistance. Let no one stand in our way." Umbridge preached from her position at the front of the class. "The older Death Eaters and I shall take care of the remaining teaching staff."

A few moments later an eerie green glow began to filter in through the windows of the classroom. Glancing outside the Dark Mark was clearly seen floating in the sky above the school. That was the signal and rising quickly the young Death Eaters began to file towards the door, their wands out. However, when the first students reached the door they found it locked tight. Annoyed by the incompetence of the students Umbridge strode forward pushing several of them aside roughly.

"What's the hold up?" She reached the door and pushing Pansy Parkinson into a wall grabbed the handle and began pulling. When that proved useless she started casting spells at the door trying to unlock it. "Open damn you!"

Several of the students gasped in surprise when a pillar of flame appeared behind Umbridge and Ginny stepped out of it. Her hair was loose and fell down over her shoulders in waves. On her back

was a blood red cloak with a border of moving flames. At its center the image of a phoenix spreading its wings as it rose from an ocean of fire. Before anyone could react Ginny had grabbed Umbridge roughly by the hair and disappeared again.

Once she was gone the student Death Eaters looked in awe at the spot she had just disappeared from.

Bellatrix Lestrange was a devoted follower of her lord and Master, Voldemort. She had worried briefly after her defeat at the hands of the Potter brat that he would replace her. However, her worries proved fruitless as she had been given the highest honor of leading the attack on Hogwarts. It would be an easy mission, after all her forces outnumbered the remaining staff nearly ten to one, and she had the student Death Eaters already inside and prepared to eliminate any student resistance.

Without Dumbledore or the other well trained teachers to defend it, Hogwarts would soon be a Death Eater fortress. All who tried to take it from them would die horrible deaths, Bellatrix would ensure it. Even now her forces broke from the cover of the tree line, throwing the Dark Mark into the air to signal their forces inside the school, and rushed across the open grounds. It was a four minute run from the edge of the grounds to the front doors of Hogwarts.

Bellatrix was at the front of the charge as she led her forces up the steps to the large front doors. It was only when she reached the top of the steps that she froze in shock. Pinned to the door by a sword through her chest was Dolores Umbridge, the leader of the Death Eater forces in Hogwarts. Above her body written on the door in what Bellatrix could only assume was the dead woman's blood were the words:

Abandon Hope, All Ye Who Enter Here

The Death Eaters behind her began to whisper amongst one another. Bellatrix heard one. "We've been misled, this is a trap. We're dead if we go in there!" Anger welled up inside her and turning she struck the man who had been speaking with the killing curse.

As the Death Eaters once again quieted and looked in horror at the crazed visage of Bellatrix she screamed. "Voldemort himself has



guaranteed our victory today! Umbridge was a fool! This is just an attempt to frighten you and leave you weak so their inferior numbers might have a chance. They are nothing! REDUCTO!" Bellatrix threw the blasting hex at the doors and the fury and power she had poured into the spell blasted one door to splinters and shot the other back so fast that it chipped the rock wall upon impact.

Screaming in fury Bellatrix stormed through the shattered doors into the Entrance Hall her wand sweeping the area constantly waiting for an attack. No attack came however and the other Death Eaters quickly gathered around her looking for any form of resistance. The Entrance Hall was empty though.

The sound of rocks grinding against each other echoed through the Entrance Hall and the Death Eaters turned in horror to watch as the wall itself moved to seal the hole left by the now destroyed doors. The last ray of moonlight disappeared as the wall sealed itself leaving no trace that the doors had ever existed. Leaving no time for the Death Eaters to react to the closing wall, every light winked out of existence. Left in the pitch black the Death Eaters backed towards one another in fear, Bellatrix stood in the middle slightly unnerved by this turn of events, her eyes jumping from shadow to shadow expecting an attack at any moment.

The attack came a moment later when from the ceiling the ghosts of Hogwarts burst forth screaming in the most terrifying way they could. The silvery light coming from them lighting the room in a unearthly glow. Several Death Eaters screamed and fired curses at the approaching ghosts, which of course did absolutely no damage to them but did strike the ceiling behind them. Chunks of ceiling fell down into the crowd of Death Eaters knocking one out.

While all of the Death Eater eyes were turned upward towards the ceiling though, none noticed Ginny appearing in the center of a group of five of them. Her blades flashed in the ghostly glow. Four Death Eaters fell to the floor with barely a sound. The fifth however, was allowed to scream as Ginny drove her sword into his stomach and wandlessly casting a feather weight charm on him took off running dragging him along by the neck into the Great Hall.

The doors to the Great Hall slammed shut behind her and the ghosts retreated back into the ceiling, once again leaving the Death Eaters in darkness. This time several lit their wands lighting the

room with the bright white light. Muffled screams could still be heard coming from within the Great Hall. The inexperienced Death Eaters edging away from the doors and looking in horror at the corpses of their comrades.

Bellatrix stood silently fuming in the middle of the Entrance Hall. She was supposed to be the Mistress of terror and psychological warfare. Yet, here she was being shown up by some school girl. When she got out of here, heads would roll.

A/N A short chapter, i know, but the next chapter should be bigger... i hope. Hopefully it will be up soon too.

As always read and review!

## Chapter 25?: The Battle Part 2/ Aftermath

"Daniel look!" Ron shouted and waited for Daniel to slow to a stop. He had been speeding ahead on his Firebolt, and focusing mostly on the Castle. He turned back to look at Ron and his face paled as it was illuminated by the sickly glow of the Dark Mark.

Ron caught up to the stunned Daniel and turned to look down at grounds. He could see the shadows of Death Eaters running across the grounds towards the Castle. They were still about a minute away. "Come on Ron we need to get to the castle and warn them!" Daniel said turning and speeding off as fast as he could towards Gryffindor tower, Ron following along behind him as fast as he could.

When he arrived at the window to Gryffindor tower, he didn't even bother trying to just unlock it and instead blasted it off it's hinges. He leapt off of his broom as he entered the common room and looked around expecting people to have been drawn by the noise. The only person to enter the room though was Ron through the window.

"Where is everyone?" Ron asked scanning the room carefully.

"I don't know. You don't think we're to late?" Daniel said moving toward stairs up to the boys dorms.

"No way the Death Eaters were still outside. Everyone's probably been told to go to the Great Hall or something, you know for protection." Ron said, and motioned towards the open entryway to the Common Room.

"Yea, probably come on lets go check." Daniel said running out of the Common Room, Ron following along behind him.

Bellatrix spun around searching all of the long shadows cast by the wand light, searching for any sign of movement. Instead the entire hall was filled with the ominous sound of the door to the Great Hall creaking open slowly. Bellatrix along with her remaining Death Eaters spun to face the door. When no one appeared in the doorway she pushed two Death Eaters towards it, coercing them forward with a glare that could kill.

The two Death Eaters reached the door and glanced nervously at one another before pushing the double doors open and leaping to

the side. A gasp of horror, and one weak willed Death Eater vomiting echoed through the Entrance Hall. Inside the Great Hall their missing comrade hung from the ceiling, his eyes were gouged out, hands gone, and legs obviously broken as they were literally tied into a bow.

Bellatrix was the only one who managed to keep eye contact on the deceased's body. A cruel laugh from her garnered the attention of her fellow Death Eater's as she pointed her wand at the body. A muttered spell and the gruesome body vanished replaced instead by the still dead body of their comrade, this time he was only hung from the ceiling, the rest of his body still intact.

"Fools, it was an illusion!" Bellatrix screamed turning on the huddling mass of Death Eaters. "She is a simple school girl! Grow a pair all of you! Now follow me!"

Bellatrix rushed past the group of Death Eaters and began to ascend the staircase. Reaching the top she barely checked to make sure the Death Eaters were following her. Instead she rushed towards the nearest corner, only the most loyal Death Eaters following her as quickly as they could. The cautious attitude of the others most likely spared their lives momentarily.

Turning the corner Bellatrix had just enough time to curse mildly before diving to the side. The Death Eaters following her weren't as lucky and a volley of cross bow bolts ripped through the first four around the corner. Bellatrix spared her felled comrades barely a glance before returning fire at the animated suits of armor who had been waiting patiently for someone to turn the corner. A few blasting curses blew the suits of armor apart before they had time to reload.

She turned back towards the remaining sixteen Death Eaters who had finally caught up to her, and were now looking in horror at the corpses of their fellows. Bellatrix grabbed two Death Eaters and pushed them in front of her forcing them to lead the group down the hall. Her new found caution saved her as when they passed the first classroom the door whipped open and snakelike ropes struck out grabbing the front two Death Eaters and yanking them into the classroom before they could make a sound.

The door slammed shut behind them, and Bellatrix didn't waste anytime in simply blasting it off the hinges. Inside the classroom

there was no trace of the other Death Eaters except a single white mask still wobbling on the ground where it had fallen. The other Death Eaters glanced around Bellatrix into the classroom looking for the missing Death Eaters. Seeing nothing one of the Death Eaters backed up into the far wall.

"Fuck this! She's no girl! She's a demon!" He screamed then turned and ran back towards the Entrance Hall probably hoping for an escape route.

"Flint come back here!" Bellatrix screamed turning towards the retreating back of the young Death Eater. He was already around the corner when she began moving after him. Only before she'd taken two steps Flint's scream filled the hall and caused the rest of the Death Eaters to take off sprinting towards the corner.

Bellatrix was the first one there and glanced around it cautiously. She grimaced when she found nothing but the decapitated body of Marcus Flint, his head lay a feet from his body. She stepped around the corner to inspect the body and while she was out of sight of her troops Ginny struck. A burst of flame in the center of the formation was the Death Eaters only warning. Two of their number were dead before the flames had even begun to disappear as Ginny drove both her swords into the abdomens of the two closest Death Eaters.

Moving like lightening she severed the wand hand of another before spinning and leaving deep lacerations in the body of another. A well placed high kick left another grasping her throat and wheezing for breathe. Ginny ducked as a Killing curse flew over her head killing a Death Eater behind her, and turning cut the legs off at the knee of the Death Eater who'd sent the curse. Using the follow through she swept up cutting into the chest of the Death Eater who's throat she'd already kicked. Then as quickly as she'd come she was gone, disappearing in a pillar of flame.

Bellatrix had turned back around the corner in time to see Ginny finish off the last two Death Eaters and disappear. In her wake she left five dead Death Eaters, and another two who were injured to the point of uselessness. Bellatrix screamed in rage and wanting to take her fury out on something fired a blasting hex at the head of the Death Eater who'd just lost his legs. She looked around at her remaining forces. Of twenty-five Death Eaters only seven remained

alive, and one had lost his wand hand leaving him useless to the group.

"I'm going to kill that bitch!" Bellatrix screamed into the silence of Hogwarts.

Ron and Daniel had just reached the third floor when they heard Bellatrix scream. "Ron I think she's found a prisoner! We have to go help them!" Daniel guessed, incorrectly.

Ron pushed forward running as fast as he could Daniel following shortly behind him. They hurried down the staircase to the second floor and rushed towards what they thought was the source of the noise. Rounding the final corner they came across Bellatrix pushing a one armed man in front of her followed by half a dozen terrified looking Death Eaters. The crowd blocked their view of the bodies in the hallway behind them.

"Let him go Bellatrix!" Daniel yelled, thinking the one armed man was a prisoner.

Bellatrix started cackling hysterically as she looked upon the forms of Daniel Potter and one of his friends standing bravely before her. "Oh look, itty bitty Potty and his wittle fwend. You're not that bitch Weasley, but you'll do." Bellatrix whipped her wand out and Daniel and Ron found themselves wrapped tightly in chains. "I think I'll make you watch your little friend here die, Potter." Bellatrix laughed crazily as she leveled her wand at Ron.

"Avada Kedavra!" Bellatrix yelled the sickly green light leaving her wand. Time seemed to slow down as the spell sped towards Ron. At the same time a pillar of flame appeared midway between Ron and the spell.

Ginny's sword flashed out of the flames attempting to intercept the spell. Her timing was a millisecond off though and the spell passed unobstructed just below her blade. "NOOOOO!" Ginny screamed, terror filled eyes turning to follow the path of the spell.

As the deadly curse passed her, time once again seemed to accelerate. The green curse hit Ron in the center of his chest picking him up and throwing his lifeless corpse backwards down the Hall. Screaming in rage Ginny turned back towards Bellatrix, eyes

burning in fury and a magically induced wind whipping her hair. A golden aura appeared around the girl, and for only the second time since joining Voldemort Bellatrix felt fear crawl up her spine.

"This shall be most amusing, don't you think Harry?" Voldemort said pointing his wand at the tied up Order members. The ropes and chains binding them fell away and they gently landed on their feet. "Order member versus Order member, and I believe father versus son."

As he finished speaking the captured members opened their eyes, which were dull and seemed lifeless. Snarling their wands flew up and a volley of spells rocketed towards Harry and the others. A glowing shield appeared in front of them as Harry and Dumbledore both worked to protect the group. As Voldemort's inner circle began to join the fight James was forced to join in to keep the shield up.

"Harry, you must get the wounded out of here! We'll do our best to hold them off." Dumbledore shouted over the fray, motioning Harry towards the downed Remus and Kingsley.

Nodding Harry disappeared in a burst of flame, reappeared crouching next Remus and Kingsley, grabbed a shoulder on each and disappeared again. Dumbledore nodded to the remaining Order members and dropped his shield, moving to intercept three Death Eaters. Tonks and Arthur moved to try and disable the imperioused Order members. James, Sirius, Elizabeth, and Molly were forced into combat against another group of encroaching Death Eaters.

All of them realized quickly it was futile. Seven on twenty-six, were impossible odds. Even remaining strictly on the defensive they wouldn't be able to last long against the Death Eaters. A few minutes tops, with Dumbledore most likely lasting the longest. Harry reappeared amongst the chaos ensuing from the battle and took in the entire situation with a glance.

Heavily outnumbered and looking too have no means of easy escape. Ignoring the regular Death Eaters Harry moved forward quickly and began helping Tonks and Arthur to disarm the imperioused Order members. The major downfall of using someone under the imperious to fight for you is that, unless your control is absolute their attacks and defensive actions are slowed as they try

to fight back against the curse. This allowed Harry, Tonks, and Arthur to disarm and stun the Order members with relative ease.

However, in that small window of time the rest of the Order suffered. Dumbledore as powerful as he was, had been backed into a corner. Molly lay unconscious on the ground with Elizabeth seated next to her looking around in confusion and blood poured from a gash on her forehead. In front of them James and Sirius fought like men possessed keeping ten Death Eaters at bay. Tonks and Arthur moved to help James while Harry quickly piled all of the unconscious Order members on top of one another and summoned Mrs. Weasley to him. In a flash Harry was gone once again.

This time it seemed like Harry had barely disappeared before he was back once again throwing up a shield just in time to block a cutting curse aimed at Sirius' neck. Two quick grabs, and an outstretched foot allowed him to grab Tonks, Arthur, and Elizabeth and disappear once again. Then just as quickly reappear alone, miss the head of a nearby Death Eater with a bludgeoning curse, grab James and Sirius and disappear once again.

When Harry reappeared, again he was behind Dumbledore and breathing heavily. "Just let me catch my breathe a second, and we'll get out of here Dumbledore." He panted.

"I don't think you'll be going anywhere Potter." Voldemort's voice rang out as he joined the mass of Death Eaters gathered around the cornered Dumbledore. "You think you can grab the old man and disappear before our volley of curses hits you? I don't think you're fast enough."

"I don't need to race my flames against you're spells. You'll be too busy trying not to be crushed." Harry said smirking playfully at the confused frown on Voldemort's face.

"Crushed?" He asked carefully, and as if in answer to his question a low rumbling filled the room. Then with a loud crack one of the support pillars came crashing down behind the Death Eaters. While they were momentarily distracted Harry arm went up, his wand appearing in his hand.

"REDUCTO MAXIMUS!" The Death Eaters and Voldemort followed the path of the curse as it flew above their heads and blasted into



the ceiling. Huge chunks of ceiling began to rain down on the panicking Death Eaters and two more pillars collapsed under the strain.

The last thing Harry saw as he grabbed Dumbledore's cloak and flamed away was Voldemort disappearing by portkey as a Death Eater next to him was crushed by a falling chunk of ceiling.

Harry reappeared in Potter manor surrounded by concerned Order members. Once he'd reappeared he collapsed to one knee the exertion of using his flame powers so much in such a short span of time finally catching up with him. Lily who had regained consciousness was by his side in an instant helping to support him and lead him towards a nearby couch.

Harry was allowed to lay down peacefully on the couch and a house-elf brought him a glass of water. Around him the Order worked frantically to heal the injured, while Dumbledore, James, and Arthur had disappeared, most likely to give an explanation to the rest of the ministry. As he lay there Harry tuned out everyone else and instead concentrated on what Ginny was doing.

During his fight at the ministry he had unconsciously shut out his bond with Ginny, but now that he'd reopened it the waves of pain and heartache at the loss of her brother came crashing down on him. On top of that was a wave of anger aimed at one thing. The death of Bellatrix Lestrange. Once he realized what had happened Harry stood and prepared to flame straight to Hogwarts, but a wave of exhaustion forced him back onto the couch.

Instead he watched helplessly as Ginny battled fiercely against Bellatrix.

A wave of pure energy surged down the hallway, Bellatrix managed to barely dive through an open doorway. The Death Eaters behind her weren't as lucky, the energy wave picked them up and hurled them backwards until they hit the wall at the end of hall. Although one or two of them remained conscious the rest remained motionless, whether dead or unconscious was unknown. Another wave of her hand and the pile of Death Eaters disappeared around the corner moving at speeds no human body should ever move at.

Ginny turned warily towards the room Bellatrix had dove into and cautiously approached the doorway. Just as she reached the edge of the doorway a stream of spells flew through the door, most cast silently as Bellatrix threw her best at Ginny. Ginny ducked back around the edge of the doorway and instead waited for Bellatrix to tire. A few moments later and the spells slowed to a halt Ginny used the pause to dive through the door and send a few blasting spells towards Bellatrix.

Bellatrix put up a shield blocking the spells before surprising Ginny by diving towards her. The move caught Ginny by surprise and she was tackled by Bellatrix her wand bouncing out of her hand as she hit the ground. Ginny hissed in pain as Bellatrix dragged her nails across the younger girl's cheeks drawing blood. Ginny brought her leg up hard and using the momentum managed to flip Bellatrix off of her. Rolling to a crouch Ginny was surprised to find that Bellatrix had recovered just as quickly.

The two crouched across from one another and stared at the other warily waiting to see who would make the first move. Ginny dove forward first and her fist collided with Bellatrix' jaw hard. Bellatrix punched Ginny in the ribs, and the two rolled backwards into one of the desks scattered around the classroom. Bellatrix unfortunately recovered first and her fist connected successfully with Ginny's throat.

The younger girl jerked backwards coughing violently as she grabbed at her injured throat. As Ginny sat on her knee's coughing violently Bellatrix recovered her wand and moved in for the kill.

"One down... Avada-"

At Potter manor Harry had been following the entire fight as best he could. He was even trying to absorb as much of Ginny's pain through the bond as he could. However, once she was hit in the throat he realized the entire situation was going bad. Pulling all the strength he could together Harry managed to flame one last time.

Bellatrix was interrupted mid curse by the familiar light of someone flaming in behind her. Moving quickly she dodged Harry's sword as it stabbed through the spot where her stomach had just been. At point blank like this Harry could do nothing to block the banishing

curse that hit him square in the chest and he was launched backwards across the classroom.

"I was wondering where you had wandered off to Potter." Bellatrix said arrogantly. "Tsk Tsk you really should learn to wait your turn. First I'm going to kill your little girlfriend then I'll finish you." Bellatrix taunted as she turned back towards Ginny, wand raised.

A burning sensation filled Bellatrix' reality as she turned back towards Ginny. Looking down in confusion she watched helplessly as her wand hand fell to the floor still clutching her wand, and a silver blade highlighted in red slid smoothly into almost the exact center of her abdomen. As realization dawned on her Bellatrix was filled with an inhuman rage and using her remaining hand grabbed the hilt of Ginny's blade pulling it deeper and Ginny closer.

Once Bellatrix had pulled Ginny as close as she was able her good hand found the girls throat. The little bitch had the indecency to look at Bellatrix with pity. How dare she kill her and then only show her pity! Bellatrix had imagined dying one day in a glorious battle where her opponent was so enraged that death would come slowly. She would choke that look off the bitch's face before she died.

Ginny felt the hand weakly clutching at her throat and could only feel pity as the crazed woman before her screamed and yelled incoherently. With one swift movement Ginny pulled her sword away from Bellatrix and spinning gracefully decapitated the most feared woman in wizarding Britain. As her body went limp Ginny looked past it to where Harry was slowly pulling himself up into a sitting position.

"Harry!" Ginny rasped, her throat still injured. She sprinted to her side and almost collapsed as the adrenaline from the battle began to wear off. Even with the ability to share each others magical cores the two battles had left both of them severely drained.

A clinking noise reached their ears and a second later Daniel still wrapped tightly in chains hobbled into the doorway of the classroom. Using the last of his energy Harry waved his hand banishing the chains. Almost immediately he slumped backwards against the wall, Ginny gasped slightly then fainted her head slumping onto Harry's shoulder.

"Harry! Ginny!" Daniel yelled rushing into the room.

Harry slowly regained consciousness to the sound of familiar voices, in the haze between sleep and full consciousness he couldn't quite place them though.

"Molly and Arthur are finally asleep." That one was definitely a man.

"Good I was worried we'd have to sedate them. I can't even begin to imagine how they must be feeling right now." The second voice was clearly a woman and it sounded as if she was sitting right next to him.

"Where's Daniel?" The man asked.

"He over there on the bed in the corner. I think he's fallen asleep." The woman sighed sadly. "I don't know what to do to help him. First Hermione and now Ron. They were best friends, and now..." She trailed off letting the sentence hang.

Harry continued to lay there, his body refusing to answer any order to move, it felt like someone had tied all of his limbs to lead weights and he could not muster enough strength to crack an eyelid open. Yet as he lay there listening to the two people talk he felt another presence slowly emerge in the back of his mind.

'Harry?' An extremely weak voice spoke in his head.

'I'm here G...' He couldn't complete the thought as a wave of exhaustion swept over him almost knocking him unconscious once again. Ginny seemed to understand his exhaustion because no further messages came, but he could still feel her mental presence in the back of his mind.

"Did Poppy say how long they might be unconscious?" The male voice suddenly spoke up.

"She said it could be anywhere from a day to a week, maybe even two. According to Elizabeth and her their magical cores were almost completely depleted, not to mention the other injuries they'd received."

"I'm surprised Harry managed to make it here, his spell destroyed almost the entire Department of Mysteries, they're still digging out some of the Death Eaters who didn't make it out." Harry had by now regained enough of his senses to place the voices as his mother and father.

"About that," Lily started hesitantly. "Is there anyway that destruction could be traced to Harry, I'm sure Fudge would love to place the blame on someone."

"Actually Fudge is no longer Minister." James said happily. "The Wizengamot approved a vote of no confidence in him earlier. He tried to blame Dumbledore for the entire thing, and insisted Voldemort could not be back. Most of the Ministry has had more than enough of that nonsense and is ready to see reason finally." James finished happily.

"So who's going to be the next Minister?" Lily asked, voicing the question both Harry and Ginny were curious to hear the answer to.

"Well right now Amelia Bones has been made acting Minister. There's going to be an official vote tomorrow amongst the Wizengamot members. I personally think Amelia's going to win, but Rufus Scrimgeour is highly favored by the more... militaristic members."

Harry felt himself slowly drifting back to sleep as his father spoke and fought to try and remain conscious. It was clearly a losing battle and he realized he would need to sleep to help his core replenish. He felt Ginny's presence diminish and voluntarily allowed himself to fall back to sleep.

"I doubt Voldemort will be able to move against the Ministry or Hogwarts again anytime soon."

Ginny tried desperately to shut out the voices, wanting nothing more than to go to sleep. However it was futile as the voices continued to grow louder. She tried to open her eyes, planning on yelling at whoever was disturbing her sleep. Opening her eyes proved to be a terrible idea and the light instantly blinded her. Instead she opted to try and ignore the voices and hope they go away.

"Almost thirty Death Eaters were killed or maimed at the Ministry and another fifteen killed and ten captured at Hogwarts. Bones and Scrimgeour's new reforms have already caught an additional twenty." This triggered a hazy memory, and Ginny vaguely wondered which was the new Minister and what their reforms were.

"Dumbledore thinks he will begin to rely heavily on the werewolves and Dementors to attack smaller targets until he can replenish his forces." A male voice said annoyingly loud.

"I thought the werewolves had decided to remain neutral?" A woman's voice asked quietly.

"Most of them have, but Fenrir still had enough pull to get about twenty to side with Voldemort." Ginny now recognized the male voice as Sirius.

It was quiet for a little while and Ginny thought she might finally be able to fall back to sleep. Unfortunately that wasn't to be as Sirius once again spoke up.

"Do you know when Molly and Arthur are having the funeral?"

What funeral? Ginny thought suddenly interested. Why would mum and dad be planning a-Ron! Suddenly the memories of that night came flooding back. I was too late! I couldn't save him... All that training and I couldn't save him!

Her brother may have been an asshole the last few years, but he was still her brother. Being unable to save him, even after all that training was almost unbearable. Ginny felt tears begin to gather and run down her face, even though her eyes remained closed. It was just as the pain of losing her brother was about to become too much that a sudden comforting sensation began to fill her. Harry had felt her grief and was pushing all the comforting emotions he could through their bond.

It was several minutes later that Ginny drifted back to sleep, tears still running down her cheeks, while Harry did his best to comfort her through the bond.

Harry drifted back to consciousness once again, and this time realized something was different. Slowly he opened his eyes, only to

be met with darkness. Hoping it was simply nighttime and that he wasn't blind Harry risked opening his eyes even more. He could make out a few blurry objects and some moonlight shining through the windows illuminated enough to assure him he wasn't blind. Looking around he saw his glasses sitting on the stand next to his bed.

His arms were stiff as he reached over to grab his glasses, it also took a lot more effort than it should have. This caused him to briefly wonder how long he had been unconscious. Elizabeth had taught them about muscle atrophy in their healing classes and from what he could tell, his muscles were most likely suffering from that. Once his glasses were on his face he looked around the Hospital Wing.

His mother was seated in a chair next to him asleep. He briefly wondered if she had left that spot at all since they were placed in the hospital wing. Ginny was in the bed next to his, and he could sense through the bond that she was still asleep. He could see some light coming from under a door on the other end of the Wing, but besides that most of the beds seemed empty. Several beds down there was a sleeping form, but Harry couldn't see who it was in the dark.

Gingerly Harry sat up pulling off the blanket. Moving slowly he swung his legs off the bed, and slowly tried standing up, figuring if his arms were weak his legs were probably in a similar state. He was correct, but his legs were still strong enough to keep him upright. The strain was noticeable though, but he didn't want to go that far. Treading carefully he managed to walk the three steps to Ginny's bed without falling over.

As if sensing him, she rolled over to face away from him, and Harry climbed in behind her spooning up against her. The stress of walking caught up with him and he barely had time to remove his glasses before falling asleep.

Lily woke up the next morning to loud snickering and a very stiff neck. Opening her eyes she realized two things very quickly. Harry was no longer in his hospital bed and someone was snapping pictures with a camera. Standing up she found Fred and George standing at the foot of Ginny's bed holding a camera and taking many pictures.

"What are you tw- Harry!" Lily realized the two were in fact taking pictures of Harry and Ginny spooned against one another in her hospital bed.

Lily glared at the twins who had put away the camera, and adopted innocent expressions. "What do you think you're doing?"

"Why we just,"

"Came to visit our favorite,"

"Sister, Mrs. Potter."

"And what should we find,"

"But her and ickle Harrikins,"

"Curled up together,"

"As if this were the,"

"Astronomy tower!" One of them, Lily couldn't be sure which finished.

"Shut up you twits, we're trying to sleep!" Ginny's voice was muffled by her pillow but she still managed to wave her hand threateningly at the twins.

"Ginny! You're awake!" Lily said rushing to her bed.

"Unfortunately. I'm going to hex those twits later though."

"Yes well, you should probably regain your strength first, you two have been asleep for over a week." Lily said conjuring a chair next to Ginny's bed.

"A week?" Harry said lifting his head from where it had been nestled in the crook of Ginny's neck and looking at his mother.

"Well eights days actually. You two completely drained your magical cores, not to mention the injuries you sustained while fighting." Lily said, handing Harry his glasses.



The two didn't say anything for a moment, but she could tell they were having one of their mental conversations. Finally Ginny buried her face in the pillow and Harry looked up worriedly at his mother. "Mum, did we... did we miss Ron's funeral?"

Lily was shocked, Poppy said memories of that night would probably be fuzzy for them at first. "No, Molly and Arthur postponed it until you two were able to make it. They knew you'd want to be there Ginny." Lily wanted to comfort the girl that would one day be her daughter-in-law, but realized that whatever she said or did would be nothing compared to the comfort Harry was already providing her.

Harry sat up, pulling Ginny into his lap as he did so. She cried into his shoulder for several minutes as he rubbed her back comfortingly and pushed comforting emotions through the bond. Lily silently signaled the twins, who had been sitting on Harry's bed watching the entire time, to follow her out of the room.

It was about twenty minutes later that Lily returned with a tray of food and potions. She'd also alerted Molly, Arthur, and Elizabeth to Harry and Ginny's return to consciousness. The four walked in to the Hospital Wing to find Harry and Ginny both out of their hospital gowns and back into their regular clothing. All three of the women instantly raised skeptical eyebrows at the two teenagers.

"And just where do you think you're going?" Molly asked, hands on her hips as she prepared to enter lecture mode.

"We were going to go down to the Great Hall, lunch should be starting soon." Harry said plainly as he and Ginny began slowly walking towards the group.

"No your not." Elizabeth said bluntly stepping in front of the two. "The Great Hall isn't serving food right now, and you two are to remain in the Hospital Wing resting until either Poppy or I tell you, you can leave." She said cutting off any argument from the two. "Now get back in bed and take these potions." She said handing each of them a goblet of purple liquid.

Realizing they wouldn't be getting past all four of the adults, Harry and Ginny moved back towards their beds. They sat down on Ginny's bed sitting against the head board and drinking their potions slowly. Once they had finished Lily placed the tray of food down

between them as Molly conjured four chairs for the remaining adults. Harry and Ginny didn't feel like beginning the conversation, so instead waited for one of the others to ask the first question.

It seemed as if no one was quite certain where to start, so finally Arthur leaned forward in his chair. "Where did you two learn to fight like that?"

Harry and Ginny glanced quickly at one another, Lily guessed they were having a quick mental conversation. "We've been practicing spells for while on our own." Harry began.

"We like to read ahead and learn the more advanced magic." Ginny continued. "Plus most of our fighting is just using phoenix flame to surprise our opponents."

"And the swords?" Elizabeth asked casually.

"We found one of the school's old armories and a portrait in there offered to teach us how to use swords. Apparently that was one of the classes taught here a long time ago." Harry lied slightly.

"Who's the new Minister?" Ginny asked trying to turn the conversation away from them.

All four adults looked surprised at the question. "Amelia Bones is, how did you know there was a new Minister?" Lily asked looking suspiciously at the two.

"We woke up a few times before this, but couldn't muster enough strength to even open our eyes, but we heard you talking a few times." Harry answered. "What was in the potion? I'm feeling a little tired."

"It was a replenishing potion, it should help prevent muscle atrophy. It pretty much gives your muscles the same feeling as if they'd been active all day, so it sometimes makes the taker drowsy." Elizabeth answered.

"Oh alright, do you mind if Harry and I go back to sleep for a little while?" Ginny asked already sliding down til her head hit the pillow.

"We'll continue this conversation when you wake up again." Lily said as Harry slid down and pulled Ginny against him. Lily casually transfigured their clothes into pajamas, and shook her head as Molly made to object to their sleeping arrangements.

Sighing, Molly nodded as the four adults stood and filed out of the Hospital Wing. Lily was the last one out the door and placed a charm to alert her should either of the two wake up.

A/N

I'm not gonna mention my huge absence, there's just two minor points i'd like to touch on.

First: I tried really hard in this chapter to show that although Harry and Ginny are powerful, they can still be beaten and wounded. I see most Death Eaters as being average fighters, while Harry/Ginny have been receiving extra training for almost three years. Members of the inner circle (like Bellatrix) will not be beaten so easily, nor will Voldemort be a walk in the park.

Second: To the groups who mentioned that some of my characters have been off character, I did that on purpose, this is an AU story. Hermione and Ron had to be removed, it's part of my character development for both Ginny and Daniel as you'll see later.

Thanks to everyone who has stuck with me I don't know when the next update will be, but i hope it will be less than a year this time.

CHP27

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Maybe

inprogress

